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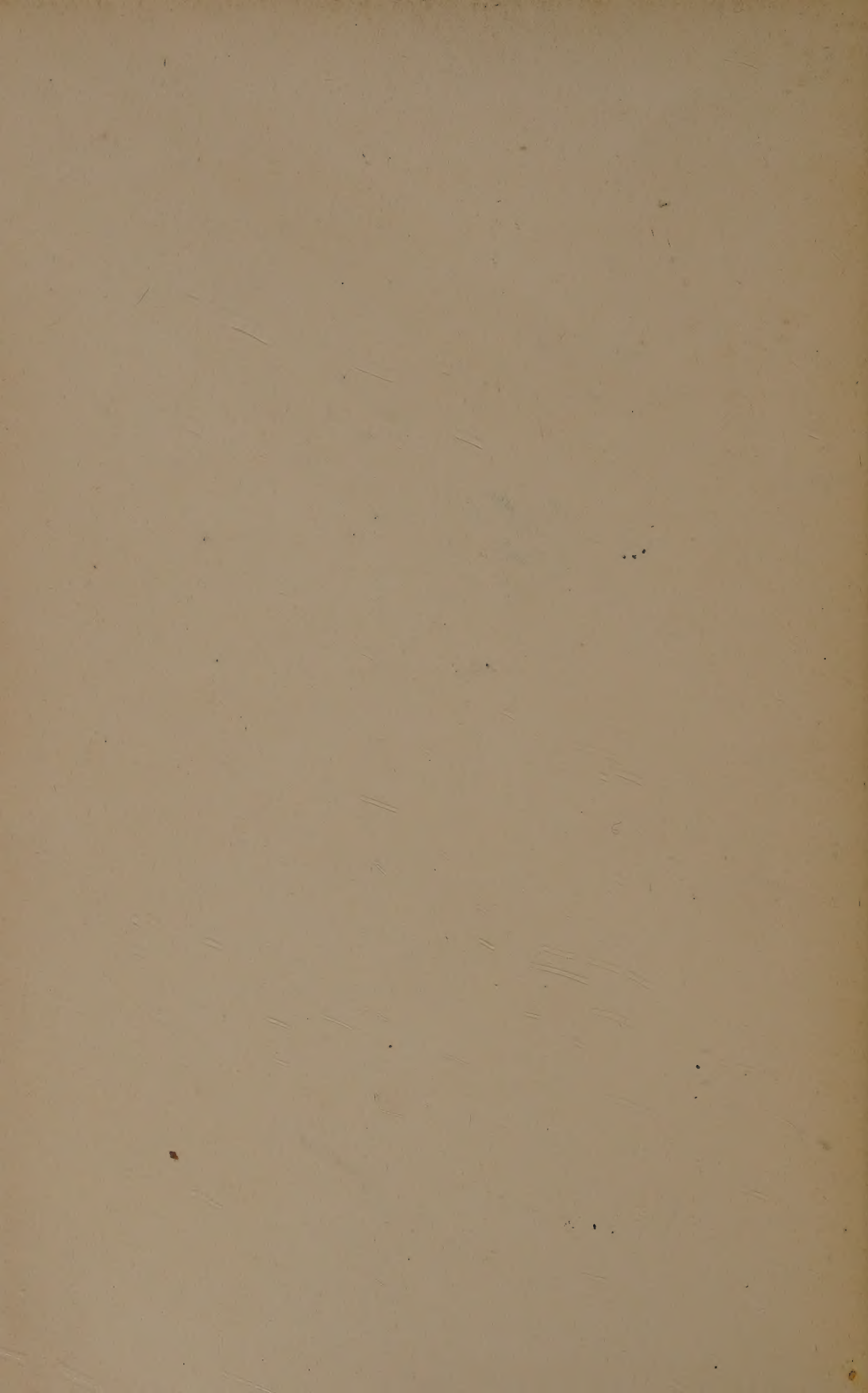
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Historical Outlines of English Phonology and Morphology

(MIDDLE ENGLISH AND MODERN ENGLISH)

By

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PREFACE

Altho the present book is based on my *Historical Outlines of English Phonology and Middle English Grammar*, published in 1919, a change of title was necessitated by the fact that the scope of the book has been enlarged by the addition of Part VI, dealing with the historical development of Modern English inflections. Apart, however, from this enlargement of its scope, the present form of the book is not a mere revision of the earlier form. About one-third of the material in the Introduction and Parts I-V is wholly new. Parts I and IV, dealing with Modern English sounds and Middle English dialects, have been almost entirely rewritten, and important additions have been made to the Introduction and Parts II and III. The changes in Part V, dealing with the language of Chaucer, have been chiefly in the way of revision and rearrangement of the material without much change of substance. The addition of Part VI suggested the desirability of a change in the order of the parts which would place the treatment of Chaucer's language in immediate proximity to the treatment of the historical development of Modern English inflections.

The phonetic notation used in the present book conforms very closely to that of the International Phonetic Association. It seemed highly desirable, however, to have a phonetic notation which should represent the *quality* of the Modern English vowels quite independently of their *quantity* and which should also discriminate between the stressed and unstressed vowels of *pity*. The notation I have adopted departs from that of the Association only so far as was necessary for the attainment of these two objects.*

* No International symbols whatever appeared to be available for representing qualitatively the vowels of English *met* and Western American *earth* or for discriminating between the vowels of the first and second syllables of *pity*, which I have represented by *e*, *ɛ*, *i*, and *ɪ* respectively. International symbols are available for representing the vowels of *full* and British *hot*, but the symbol for the former sound

My obligations to those scholars whose criticisms and corrections of the earlier form of this book have come to me thru reviews and by personal communication are greater than I can either specify or adequately characterize. I am under very particular obligations, however, to Professor John S. Kenyon of Hiram College. The phonetic notation I use was worked out in collaboration with him and is almost identical with that which he uses in his *American Pronunciation* and I am also indebted to him for corrections and suggestions he made after reading the Introduction and Parts I-V of the present book in page proof.

With regard to printed sources of information, my greatest single obligation is to Professor Karl Luick's admirably clear, coherent, and comprehensive treatment of the development of the Old English and Middle English vowels contained in his *Historische Grammatik der englischen Sprache* (Leipzig, 1914-21 Lieferungen 1-6). I am also aware of particular obligations to Wyld's *History of Modern Colloquial English*, Krapp's *Pronunciation of Standard English in America*, Kenyon's *American Pronunciation*, Jones's *English Pronunciation*, Palmer's *Grammar of Spoken English*, Holmqvist's *History of the English Present Inflections particularly -th and -s*, Brandl's *Zur Geographie der altenglischen Dialekte*, Bülbring's *Altenglisches Elementarbuch*, Morsbach's *Ueber den Ursprung der neuenglischen Schriftsprache*, Lekebusch's *Die londoner Urkundensprache von 1430-1500*, and Mätzner's *Wörterbuch to Altenglische Sprachproben*, but it would be merely tedious to attempt to name all the sources from which I have derived important help.

The passages printed below are taken (*mutatis mutandis*) from the preface to *Historical Outlines of English Phonology and Middle English Grammar*.

Feb. 24, 1925

S. M.

was difficult to obtain in a type-face that was in harmony with the rest of the font and the symbol for the latter (the inverted **u**) is seldom used even by those who conform most closely to the International system. Moreover, I wished to reserve the latter symbol for representing the unrounded variety of the vowel (see note 32 below). It seemed best, therefore, to adopt for these two vowels the symbols **u**, and **ø**, analogous to **e** and **i**. It may be noted that all the hooked vowel symbols represent lax vowels. The symbol **æ** I have adopted from Kenyon's *American Pronunciation*. (The symbol **ʒ** for the *g* of North German *sagen* was substituted for the International symbol because of certain practical difficulties involved in obtaining the desired type-face.)

Inasmuch as this book is intended for use in three distinct courses of the English curriculum—Chaucer, Middle English, and the history of the English language—I hope I may be permitted a few words of explanation as to the purpose its various parts are intended to serve in relation to these courses.

The elementary course in Chaucer is usually the student's introduction both to the study of medieval literature and to the study of Middle English. There will always, probably, be difference of opinion as to the relative emphasis that should be placed on these two aspects of the course, but its content must always be to some extent linguistic. All teachers desire that their students shall learn to read Chaucer aloud with a facility comparable to that with which they read a modern poet and with a fair degree of approximation to Chaucer's own pronunciation, and most teachers desire that they shall acquire some notion of the organic value of final *e* in Chaucer's language. The purpose of Part V of this book is to enable the elementary student to acquire a sound and accurate knowledge of Chaucer's language without the expenditure of an inordinate amount of time, and to arouse the student's interest in this part of his work by emphasizing the principles that are illustrated in the study of Chaucer's language. The treatment of the subject is intended to be thoroly clear to students who have not studied Old English and yet to give such students some degree of real understanding of the relation of Chaucer's language to Old English on the one hand and to Modern English on the other.

Of all the languages taught in our universities Middle English furnishes the best material for the study of language in the making, for the direct observation of linguistic change; yet the pedagogical difficulties involved in emphasising adequately this aspect of the study of Middle English are such that our courses in Middle English have tended on the whole to become mere translation courses. In Part III of this book, dealing with the historical development of Middle English inflections, I have tried to unify for the student the apparent confusion of Early Middle English forms by showing in [some] detail how Old English developed into the Middle English of Chaucer thru the action of the two great causes of change in language, sound-change and analogy. The study of Part III is prepared for by the account of the history of English sounds which is contained in Part II, and it is supplemented by the account of the Middle English dialects which is contained in Part IV.

The course in the history of the English language is usually intended for students who have studied neither Old English nor Middle English, and for that reason it presents certain difficulties for the teacher. The greatest difficulty is that of enabling such students to acquire anything approaching a clear and definite knowledge of the changes of pronunciation that have taken place in English during the past thousand years. The best method, I believe, of meeting this difficulty is to begin the study of English phonology with the phonetic analysis of the student's own speech, this analysis being accompanied by and based upon a study of the elements of phonetics and practice in the use of a phonetic alphabet. If then the Old English, Middle English, and Modern English words that illustrate English sound-changes are interpreted by means of the phonetic alphabet which the student has learned, he can gain from a study of them such a knowledge of the history of English sounds as he could not possibly gain from a study of the same words in their ordinary spellings. The Introduction to this book, dealing with the elements of phonetics, Part I, dealing with Modern English sounds, and Part II, dealing with the history of English sounds, furnish material for the study of English phonology according to this method.

It would be impossible for me to acknowledge my indebtedness to all the sources I have used in the preparation of this book, but I know that I am under particular obligations to Sweet's *History of English Sounds*, *New English Grammar*, *First Middle English Primer*, *Second Middle English Primer*, *Sounds of English*, and *Primer of Spoken English*; Jespersen's *Progress in Language with Special Reference to English and Modern English Grammar*, Part I (*Sounds and Spellings*); Wyld's *Historical Study of the Mother Tongue and Short History of English*; Grandgent's *English in America* (*Die Neueren Sprachen*, II, 443 ff., 520 ff.); Morsbach's *Mittelenglische Grammatik*; Kaluza's *Historische Grammatik der englischen Sprache*; Stratmann's *Middle English Dictionary* (revised by Bradley); Emerson's *Middle English Reader*; Child's *Observations on the Language of Chaucer*; Kittredge's *Observations on the Language of Chaucer's Troilus*; Ten Brink's *Language and Metre of Chaucer* (translated by Smith); Liddell's grammatical introduction to his edition of Chaucer's *Prologue to the Canterbury Tales*, *Knightes Tale*, etc.; Skeat's *Complete Works of Geoffrey Chaucer* (Oxford, 6 vols.); Cromie's *Ryme-Index to the Ellesmere Manuscript of Chaucer's Canterbury Tales*; and Hempl's *Chaucer's Pronunciation*.

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INTRODUCTION

THE ELEMENTS OF PHONETICS

1. Organs of Speech. The primary condition for the production of speech-sounds is the passage of a stream of breath thru the mouth passage or thru the nasal passage or thru both. This stream of breath is modified in various ways by movements of the organs of speech. The principal movable organs concerned in the production of English speech-sounds are the so-called vocal cords, situated in the larynx; the soft palate or velum; the tongue; the lips; and the lower jaw. The velum (which terminates below in the uvula) forms the back part of the roof of the mouth, the hard palate forming the front part.

2. Voiced and Voiceless Sounds. With reference to the action of the vocal cords, sounds are either voiced or voiceless. In the production of a voiceless sound, the stream of air passes freely thru the larynx; the vocal cords are separated, so that they offer no impediment to the stream of air and therefore do not vibrate. But in the production of a voiced sound, the vocal cords are drawn into contact or close together so that they are caused to vibrate by the stream of air which passes between them. This vibration can be felt by placing the first two fingers upon the larynx or "Adam's apple" while one is pronouncing a vowel sound, or the consonant *v*. All vowel sounds are ordinarily voiced, but some consonants are voiced and some are voiceless.¹ It is chiefly voice that distinguishes *g* (as in *get*) from *k* (as in *kept*), *d* from *t*, *b* from *p*, *v* from *f*, *z* (as in *zoo*) from *s* (as in *soon*), and the sound of *th* in *then* from the sound of *th* in *thin*.²

¹ Vowels and the consonants that are ordinarily voiced can also be whispered. In whispering the opening of the glottis (i.e. the space between the vocal cords) is such that the passage of the stream of air causes friction but not those regular vibrations that characterize voice. Speakers of English very commonly whisper the last of two voiced consonants that terminate a word followed by a pause (e.g. in *leaves*). Voiceless consonants are probably not modified when we whisper, but are made with the glottis open as in ordinary speech.

² By practice one may soon learn to distinguish voiced sounds from voiceless ones. A good exercise for practice is to pronounce alternately *s* and *z*, *f* and *v*, and the two

3. **Stops and Spirants.** With reference to the manner of their articulation, consonants are distinguished as stopped consonants (or explosives) and open consonants (or spirants). In the production of stopped consonants, the breath stream is stopped at some point by the complete closing of the mouth passage. If (as is usually the case) it is the outgoing breath stream that is stopped, the density of the air behind the stoppage becomes greater than the density of the outer air, so that when the stop is opened an explosion occurs. In the production of open consonants or spirants, however, the breath stream is not completely stopped but is made to pass thru an opening so narrow that the friction causes a buzzing or hissing noise. Stopped consonants are Modern English **g** (as in **go**)³ **k**, **d**, **t**, **b**, **p**; open consonants are **z**, **s**, **th** (as in **then**), **th** (as in **thin**), **v**, **f**. The **ch** in **chill** and the **g** in **gin** are combinations of a stop consonant with an open consonant (approximately **t** with **sh** and **d** with **s** as in **measure**). In these combinations the closure for the stop and for the open consonant is made at the same or nearly the same point, and when the stop is opened the explosion occurs thru the narrow opening of the spirant; such combinations are called **affricates**.

4. The complete or partial closure required to produce stops and open consonants is usually made by means of the tongue or lips, and the quality of the various sounds is determined by the manner in which the closure is made. Modern English **g** (as in **go**) and **c** (as in **comb**) are produced by contact of the tongue against the soft palate; **y** (as in **yield**) is made with an incomplete closure between the tongue and the hard palate; **d** and **t** are made by contact of the tongue against the ridge above the upper front teeth or against the teeth themselves; **z** and **s** are made with an incomplete closure at the same point; **b** and **p** are produced by a closure of the two lips; **v** and **f** are produced with an incomplete closure between the lower lip and the upper front teeth; **th** as in **then** and **th** as in **thin** are produced by causing air to pass between the tongue and the backs or edges of the upper front teeth.

sounds of **th**, taking care to pronounce the consonant sound **alone** without the aid of a vowel. The sounds of **t** and **d**, **p** and **b**, etc., when pronounced without a vowel, will also be felt and heard to be very different in character. It will also be observed that voiced sounds, whether vowels or consonants, are capable of being uttered with variations of musical pitch without changing the shape of the mouth cavity, whereas voiceless sounds are not. Of the following words, which begin with a voiced and which with a voiceless consonant: **let**, **met**, **net**, **rat**, **shut**, **chin**?

³ Are **r**, **sh**, and **l** open consonants or stopped consonants?

According to the place of their formation, these consonants are therefore classified as velar consonants (**g** as in **go**, **c** as in **comb**); palatal consonants (**y**); dental consonants (**d**, **t**, **z**, **s**, **th** in **then**, **th** in **thin**); and labial consonants (**b**, **p**, **v**, **f**).

5. Nasal and Oral Consonants. All of the consonants mentioned in the preceding paragraph are oral consonants. Nasal consonants are **m**, **n**, and **ng** (as in **thing**). In the articulation of the oral consonants, the velum is retracted until it makes contact with the back wall of the throat, which at the same time moves forward so as to close the passage from the throat to the nasal cavity. In the articulation of nasal consonants, however, the velum is in the position it occupies in ordinary breathing, and the mouth passage is stopped by the lips or tongue, being made for **m**, **n**, and **ng**, precisely as for **b**, **d**, and **g**, respectively.

Vowels are normally oral sounds, but they become nasalized if the velum is not completely retracted and the passage to the nasal cavity is partly open. Consonants are also nasalized when they are pronounced with incomplete retraction of the velum. The nasalized vowels of Modern French are pronounced with no retraction of the velum and with the passage from the throat to the nasal cavity wide open.

6. Vowels. Vowel sounds are more open than open consonant sounds. In the formation of an open consonant, a stream of air is made to pass thru an opening so narrow that the passage of the air causes friction and therefore noise. In the formation of a vowel, however, the mouth opening is so wide that the friction of the air against the sides of the opening causes very little noise or none at all.

7. Open and Close Vowels. But the vowels are not all equally open in their formation. If one pronounces in order the vowel sounds of the words **hat**, **hate**, **heat**, he will observe that in pronouncing each of these successive sounds the tongue is closer to the roof of the mouth. When we pronounce the series, the tongue starts from a position considerably below the roof of the mouth and ends in a position quite close to the roof of the mouth. This can be felt, and it can also be seen by pronouncing the sounds before a mirror. The same thing can be observed in regard to the vowels of the words **law**, **low**, **loot**. As we pronounce this series of vowels, we can feel the tongue going higher in the mouth, and we can see it indirectly by watching the upward movement of the lower jaw as we pronounce the three sounds before a mirror.

8. This difference in openness or height is the basis of one of the most important classifications of vowel sounds. We distinguish at least three degrees in the height of vowel sounds. If the tongue is quite close to the roof of the mouth, we call the vowel a **high** vowel. If the tongue occupies a low position in the mouth, we call the vowel a **low** vowel. If the tongue is in a position about midway between its extreme high position and its extreme low position, we call the vowel a **mid** vowel. So the vowels of **law** and **hat** are **low** vowels, the vowels of **low** and **hate** are **mid** vowels, and the vowels of **loot** and **heat** are **high** vowels.

9. **Back and Front Vowels.** When we pronounce in succession the two series of vowels heard in **law, low, loot,** and **hat, hate, heat,** we can perceive that the tongue lies differently as we utter the two series. When we pronounce the vowels of **law, low, loot,** the tongue is closest to the **back** part of the roof of the mouth. When we pronounce the vowels of **hat, hate, heat,** the tongue is closest to the **front** part of the roof of the mouth. This can be felt, and it can also be seen to a certain extent by looking into the mouth as we pronounce the two series of sounds before a mirror. We therefore call the vowels of **law, low, loot,** **back** vowels, and the vowels of **hat, hate, heat,** **front** vowels. This is the second basis of the classification of vowel sounds.

10. Combining the two classifications of vowel sounds, we say that the vowel of **hat** is a **low front** vowel, that the vowel of **hate** is a **mid front** vowel, that the vowel of **heat** is a **high front** vowel, that the vowel of **law** is a **low back** vowel, that the vowel of **low** is a **mid back** vowel, and that the vowel of **loot** is a **high back** vowel.⁴

11. **Round and Unround vowels.** If one pronounces before a mirror the two series of vowel sounds heard in **hat, hate, heat,** and **law, low, loot,** he will see that the action of the lips in pronouncing the two series is not the same. In pronouncing the first series, the lips are either in the neutral position which they occupy when they are in a position of rest with the mouth slightly open, or else the lip opening is enlarged by a slight depression of the lower lip or by drawing apart the corners of the mouth. But in pronouncing the latter series the lip opening is modified by bringing together the corners of the mouth, with or without raising the lower

⁴ Some vowels, for example **a** in English **Cuba**, **ɐ** in German **gabe**, **ɛ** in French **je**, are neither front vowels nor back vowels. They occur chiefly in unstressed syllables and are generally termed **mixed** vowels.

lip. On the basis of this difference in the action of the lips we make the distinction between **round** and **unround** vowels, and call the vowel of **law** a **low back round** vowel, the vowel of **low** a **mid back round** vowel, and the vowel of **loot** a **high back round** vowel. The vowels of **hat, hate, heat**, on the other hand, are **unround** vowels.

Round vowels differ considerably in the degree of their rounding. The vowel of **loot** is more rounded than the vowel of **low**, and the vowel of **low** is more rounded than the vowel of **law**; in fact some speakers of English pronounce the vowel of **law** with very little rounding or none at all.

12. All of the English front vowels are unround, but front round vowels occur in French and German. The vowels of French **une** and German **kühn** and **müssen** are high front round vowels. The vowels of French **peu** and German **schön** and **hölle** are mid front round vowels. The vowels of **une** and **kühn** may be roughly described as formed with the tongue position of the vowel of English **heat** and the lip rounding of the vowel of English **loot**. The vowel of **müssen** may be described as formed with the tongue position of the vowel of English **hit** and the lip rounding of the vowel of English **full**. The vowels of **peu** and **schön** may be described as formed with the tongue position of the vowel of English **hate** and the lip rounding of the vowel of English **note**. And the vowel of **hölle** may be described as formed with the tongue position of the vowel of English **bet** and the lip rounding of the vowel of English **law**.

13. **Tense and Lax vowels.** If we pronounce the vowel of **loot** and then the vowel of **look**, the vowel of **beat** and then the vowel of **bit**, we can feel in pronouncing the first vowel of each pair a degree of tenseness in the tongue that we do not feel in pronouncing the second vowel of the pair. The first pair of vowels are both high back round vowels, the second pair are both high front unround vowels, yet the acoustic quality of the first member of each pair is distinctly different from that of the second member. This difference of acoustic quality is chiefly the result of the difference that we observe in the tenseness of the tongue. We therefore call the vowels of **loot** and **beat** **tense** vowels and the vowels of **look** and **bit** **lax** vowels. The distinction between tense and lax vowels is most clearly perceptible and most distinct in its acoustic effect in the high vowels, but we find the same difference, tho in a less degree, in the mid and low vowels. The vowel of **bait** differs from the vowel of **bet** chiefly in being more tense, at least in American English. The vowel

of **earth** is tense, and the vowel of the second syllable of **Cuba**, tho **made** with nearly the same tongue position, is lax. The vowels of **note** and **naught** are also tense. The vowel of the first syllable of **fairy** is tense in the speech of some persons and lax in the speech of others. The other vowels of English are all lax.

We should understand, however, in making this distinction between tense and lax vowels that the distinction is a relative one. All the English vowels are lax as compared with the stressed vowels of French, which are all very tense. The German short vowels are lax, and the long vowels are tense, tho less tense than those of French. And the English tense vowels are less tense than the German tense vowels.

14. Quantity of Vowels. The foregoing classification of vowel sounds has reference only to the **quality** of vowels. But vowels differ from each other not only in quality but also in **quantity** or length of duration. With regard to quantity, vowels are commonly distinguished as **long** and **short**. But the student must be on his guard against the phonetically incorrect use of the terms long and short that he finds in Modern English dictionaries. The vowel of **bite**, for example, is called "long i" and the vowel of **bit** "short i," but the first is really a diphthong and the second a simple vowel; the vowel of **mate** is called "long a" and the vowel of **mat** "short a," but the two vowels differ in quality as well as quantity, for the first is a mid front unround vowel and the second is a low front unround vowel; the vowel of **loot** is called "long oo" and the vowel of **look** "short oo," but tho they are both high back round vowels they are not a longer and shorter variety of the same vowel, for the first vowel is tense and the second is lax. Differences of mere quantity or duration in vowels of the same quality do occur, however, in Modern English. The vowel of **gnaw** is longer than the vowel of **gnawed** and the vowel of **gnawed** is longer than the vowel of **naught**, tho the quality of the vowel is the same in the three words. But this variation depends on the phonetic environment of the vowel; a vowel is longer when it is final than when it is followed by a consonant, and longer when it is followed by a voiced consonant than when it is followed by a voiceless consonant. This variation of vowel quantity according to the phonetic environment of the vowel is made automatically by speakers of English.

In the speech of some persons who do not pronounce **r** before consonants the words **heart** and **hot**, **hard** and **hod**, **part** and **pot**, etc., differ only in the fact that the vowel of the first word of each pair is of longer

duration than the vowel of the second word of the pair. And in the speech of perhaps the majority of Americans the words **balm** and **bomb** differ only in the fact that the vowel of the first word is longer than the vowel of the second. With these exceptions, however, differences in vowel quantity are not in themselves significant for the expression of meaning in Modern English, but are either dependent on the phonetic environment of the vowel or are combined with differences in vowel quality.

15. Diphthongs. A diphthong consists of two vowel sounds pronounced in a single syllable. In Modern English we have diphthongs in the words **foil**, **foul**, and **file**.⁵ In these diphthongs the first element is more strongly stressed than the second; such diphthongs are called **falling** diphthongs. Diphthongs in which the second element is more strongly stressed than the first are called **rising** diphthongs.

⁵ For the diphthongisation of certain long vowels in Modern English see note 8 below.

PART I

MODERN ENGLISH SOUNDS

16. Phonetic Alphabet. The sounds of Modern English are expressed in phonetic notation as follows:

ɑ	like	a	in	father ; o in fodder ⁶
a	"	a	"	French la ⁷
æ	"	a	"	hat
b	"	b	"	beat
d	"	d	"	doom
e	"	a	"	hate, vacation ⁸

⁶ The vowel written **o** in *fodder, hot, not*, etc., is in most parts of the United States the same sound as that which is written with **a** in *father* but shorter. In eastern New England and Great Britain, however, the **o** in *fodder, hot, not*, etc., is the vowel which is represented in this notation by [ɒ]. (Here and elsewhere the brackets indicate that the spellings they enclose are phonetic spellings.)

⁷ The **a** of French *la* is only an approximate equivalent of English [a] because the French [a] is a tense vowel and the English vowel is lax (see section 13 above). No satisfactory English keyword can be given for this sound because, tho it occurs in a number of varieties of English, there is no word or group of words in which it occurs in *all* varieties of English. It is intermediate between [a] and [æ], and is the vowel which some persons use as a compromise between [a] and [æ] or [ɛ] in words like *past, laugh, half*, etc.

⁸ In stressed syllables Modern English [e], [i], [o], and [u] tend to be diphthongs, not simple vowels. But the degree of diphthongisation varies greatly according to circumstances. The amount of diphthongisation is greatest when the vowel is final and is followed by a pause. Such words as *hay, key, hoe, and coo* when they are followed by a pause should be written [hɛe] or [heɪ], [kiɪ] or [kij], [hɔo] or [hou], and [kuu] or [kuw]. (The quality of the vowels composing these diphthongs varies more or less with different individuals and in different localities.) There is a considerable amount of diphthongisation when the vowel is final but is not followed by a pause or when the vowel is followed by a voiced consonant. In such words as *fade, feed, load, and food* the vowels may be transcribed either as diphthongs or as [e], [i], [o], and [u]. When these vowels are followed by voiceless consonants there is little or no diphthongisation. The reason for this variation in amount of diphthongisation according to the phonetic environment of the vowel is that the longer the vowel is the more it is diphthongised, and Modern English vowels are longest when they are final and followed by a pause and are shortest when they are followed by voiceless consonants. See section

e	like	e	in	met
ɛ	"	ai	"	fairy ⁹
f	"	f	"	fought
g	"	g	"	goat
h	"	h	"	heed
i	"	ee	"	feet ¹⁰
i	"	i	"	hit; ea in hearing
i	"	ia	"	carriage; y in pretty ¹¹
j	"	y	"	yield
k	"	k	"	kin
l	"	l	"	let
m	"	m	"	mate
n	"	n	"	need
ŋ	"	ng	"	song
o	"	o	"	note, donation ¹²
ɒ	"	o	"	hot (British and eastern New England pronunciation) ¹²
ɔ	"	aw	"	law
p	"	p	"	put
r	"	r	"	rat, carry
s	"	s	"	sight
ʃ	"	sh	"	shout
ʒ	"	s	"	pleasure
t	"	t	"	tooth
θ	"	th	"	thin
ð	"	th	"	then
u	"	oo	"	boot ¹²
ʊ	"	u	"	full; oo in poorer

14 above. When [e], [o], and [u] occur in unstressed syllables, as in *vacation*, *donation*, and unstressed [hu], they are simple vowels.

⁹ No unambiguous keyword can be given for [ɛ] because the low front tense vowel which it represents is replaced in some varieties of English by the mid front tense vowel [e] or by the low front lax vowel [æ]. The vowel [ɛ] seems to prevail more widely in *fairy* than in any other word. I use the symbol [ɛ] to represent any front tense vowel that is lower than [e].

¹⁰ See note 8 above.

¹¹ This vowel occurs only in unstressed syllables. See note 36 below.

¹² See note 8 above.

¹³ The nearest equivalent to [ɒ] in the speech of western Americans and others who pronounce *hot*, *fodder*, etc., with [ɑ] instead of [ɒ] is the unstressed *au* of *audacious*, which is a somewhat more lax vowel than the [ɔ] of *law*.

ʌ	like	u	in	hut
ɜ	"	u	"	hurt; ea in earth; i in bird; e in berth; o in word (Western U. S. pronunciation) ¹⁵
ə	"	a	"	about ¹⁶
ɜ	"	u	"	hurt, etc., (Southern British and eastern New England pronunciation) ¹⁷
v	"	v	"	vat
w	"	w	"	wine
hw	"	wh	"	what ¹⁸
z	"	z	"	zest
ç	"	h	"	hue; ¹⁹ ch in German ich
x	"	wh	"	what; ²⁰ ch in German nacht

Diphthongs:

ai	like	i	in	find ²¹
au	"	ou	"	out ²¹
ju	"	u	"	mute, use ²²
ɔi	"	oy	"	boy ²³

¹⁵ The sound represented by *u*, *ea*, *i*, *e*, and *o* plus *r* in these words is in the speech of many Americans a single sound which may be represented phonetically by the character *ɜ* alone, e.g. [*hɜt*] [*ɜθ*], etc. The sound which I use in these words seems not to be a single sound but a combination which begins with a vowel which is distinctly different from [ə] and ends in the sound which I represent by *r*. See note 34 below.

¹⁶ This vowel occurs only in unstressed syllables.

¹⁷ This sound closely resembles [ə] but is longer than [ə] and is tense instead of lax (see section 13 above). It occurs only in varieties of English in which *r* is not pronounced before consonants.

¹⁸ In southern British English *what*, *which*, *why*, etc., are usually pronounced with [w] instead of [hw] and this pronunciation is very common also in American English.

¹⁹ Initial [ç] occurs in *hue* only when the articulation is extremely energetic. With less energetic articulation the word is pronounced with initial [h].

²⁰ Initial [x] occurs in *what* only when the articulation is extremely energetic. With less energetic articulation the word is pronounced with initial [hw] or [w].

²¹ The symbols [ai] and [au] are used for practical convenience to represent diphthongs which vary considerably in different varieties of English. In cultivated speech the first elements of [ai] and [au] vary between [a] and [ɛ]. The second element of these two diphthongs might be more accurately represented by [i] and [u] respectively.

²² In American English both [ju] and [ju] occur in such words. The combinations are composed of nearly the same elements but in the production of [ju] the second element is more strongly stressed than the first and in the production of [ju] the two elements have equal stress or the first is more strongly stressed than the second.

²³ The first element of this diphthong varies between [ɔ] and [ə], and the second element might be more accurately represented by [i].

Consonant combinations:

tʃ like **ch** in **choose**
 dʒ “ **j** “ **jaw**; **g** in **cage**

For the representation of certain sounds that occurred in Old English and Middle English, but which do not occur in Modern English, the following additional characters are needed:

ʒ like **g** in North German **sagen**²⁴
 y “ **üh** “ German **kühn**; **ü** in German **müssen**; **u** in French **une**
 œ “ **ö** “ German **hören, wörter**; **eu** in French **peu, peur**

17. Vowel Quantity. The vowels [e], [ɛ], [i], [o], [ɔ], [u], [ɜ], and [ɜ], when fully stressed, are always long or “half-long”. The vowels [æ], [ɛ], [i], [ɪ], [ɒ], [u], [ʌ], and [ə] are nearly always short.²⁵ The vowel [a] when fully stressed is always long in some varieties of English, but in others it occurs both as a long and as a short vowel.

Long vowels may be marked by the modifier : placed after the vowel, and half-long vowels may be marked (if it seems desirable to indicate two degrees of length) by the modifier ː; for example, *fade* and *feed* may be transcribed [feɪd] and [fiːd] and *fate* and *feet* may be transcribed [feɪt] and [fiːt]. But since (as was stated above in section 14) differences in vowel quantity in Modern English are nearly always either dependent on the phonetic environment of the vowel or are combined with differences in vowel quality, it is not necessary for most purposes to mark long vowels in the phonetic transcription of Modern English. The only vowel which will be regularly marked long in this part of the book is the long [a] of such words as *father*, *balm*, etc., which in the transcriber’s dialect is identical in quality with the short [a] of *fodder* and *bomb*. (In Parts II, V, and VI, however, all long vowels are marked as such in the transcription of Modern English in order to show the relation between vowel quantity in Middle English and Modern English.)

18. Syllabic Consonants. The sounds [n], [l], and [r] frequently form a syllable even when not accompanied by a vowel, for example in

²⁴ See note 51 below.

²⁵ The chief exceptions to this statement are that [i] and [u] are long before r (as in *hearing* and *poorer*) and that [æ] occurs as a long vowel in some varieties of English under the conditions stated in 28, 4 and 28, 10 below (see also note 9 above).

written [rɪt̪n], *people* [pipl̪], *father* [fa:ðr̪]. These syllabic consonants may be represented by the symbols [ɱ], [l̪], and [r̪]. It is unnecessary in the examples just given to mark the consonants as syllabic because in such words as these they cannot be pronounced at all without being syllabic. The special designation for syllabic consonants is used only where there is a possibility of the sound being either syllabic or nonsyllabic, as in *gluttony* [glʌt̪n̪] and *flattery* [flæt̪r̪i].

19. Keywords. The modern English keywords given above are written in phonetic notation as follows:

fa:ðr̪	fit	doneʃən	fʊl	hwat
fadr̪	hɪt	hɒt	pʊr̪	zɛst
hæt	hɪr̪ɪŋ	lɒ	hʌt	ɟju
bit	kæɪɪdʒ	pʊt	hært	xwat
dum	pri:t̪	ræt	ɜrθ	faind
het	jild	kæɪ	bærd	aut
vekeʃən	kɪn	sait	bærθ	mjʊt, mjʊt
mɛt	lɛt	ʃaut	wærd	ɟuz, ɟuz
fɛɪ	met	plɛʒr̪	əbaut	bɔi
fɒt	nɪd	tuθ	hæt	tʃuz
got	sɒŋ	θɪn	væt	dʒɔ
hid	not	ðɛn	wain	kedʒ
		but		

20. Accentuation. In almost all Modern English words of two or more syllables, one syllable is pronounced with decidedly stronger stress than the others.²⁹ Stress is indicated when necessary by prefixing to the stressed syllable the symbol ' , as in ['hæpi]. In words of two or more syllables there is frequently a secondary stress on one of the syllables, as in ['ɪndɪ'ket], ['dɛʒɪg'netəd], ['ɪntr'mɪdiət]. And in a group of words constituting a short sentence or an element of a longer sentence we find a similar distribution of syllables uttered with varying degrees of stress. In the sentence "Did he find the book he was looking for?", for example, *find*, *book*, the first syllable of *looking*, and *for* are uttered with decidedly

²⁹ "Level" stress occurs in such words as *undo* and in such an expression as *black bird* as compared with *blackbird*.

stronger stress than the other syllables.²⁷ And of the weakly stressed syllables, *did* has a slightly stronger stress than *he* which follows it. But if we utter the sentence in the way that is suggested by printing it "*Did* he find the book he was looking for?", we notice that *did* has become a strongly stressed word. And when we utter the sentence as is suggested by printing it "Did *he* find the book he was looking for?", we notice that the first *he* has become a strongly stressed word, tho the second *he* is still unstressed. The preponderance of stress on one or more syllables of a single word is called **word-stress**, and the preponderance of stress on certain syllables of a syntactical group of words is called **sentence-stress**.

21. Gradation. "Perhaps the most characteristic feature of English phonology is the extreme sensitiveness of its sounds to variations in the degree of stress, giving rise to the varied phenomena of gradation."²⁸ Gradation is illustrated in the alternative pronunciations of such words as the following:

aristocrat	'æristə'kræt	ə'rɪstə'kræt
illustrate	'ɪlə'stret	ɪ'lə'stret
peremptory	'perəmp'tɔri	pə'rɛmptəri

In these examples it will be noticed that when the syllables containing [æ], [ɪ], [ʌ], [ɛ], and [ɔ] are pronounced without stress the quality of the vowels changes to [ə] or [ɪ]. But gradation also occurs in correlation with differences in sentence-stress. If we listen closely to the sentence "Did *he* find the book he was looking for?" as uttered colloquially, we notice that the first *he* is the "strong" form [hi:] which is used when the word is emphatic and therefore stressed, and that the second *he* is the "weak" form which is used when the word is unstressed; this weak form is [hi] at the beginning of a sentence or after a pause, but usually [ɪ] in other situations. In the sentence "Did he find the book *I* was looking for?" the word *I* has the strong form [aɪ], but when the word is unstressed it has the weak form [əɪ], which in very rapid colloquial speech is reduced to [ə]. Many examples of weak forms of pronouns, auxiliary

²⁷ The distribution of primary and secondary stresses among the four strongly stressed syllables of the sentence would depend on the particular situation in which the sentence was uttered, but *for* would always probably have secondary stress.

²⁸ Sweet, *The Sounds of English*, p. 65.

verbs, prepositions, conjunctions, etc., may be found in the phonetic transcription given in the following section.²⁹

22. Modern English in Phonetic Notation. The pronunciation represented in the paragraphs printed below is the natural pronunciation of the transcriber (who is a native of southeastern Pennsylvania) when speaking at a rate about midway between slow, formal speech and rapid, colloquial speech. In the transcriber's dialect the vowel [ə] is extremely frequent and occurs in many situations where speakers from some other localities would use [ɪ], for example in [klæsəz] and [kəltəvetəd], line 1. In the transcriber's dialect also the vowel [ɛ] occurs in certain words which have [æ] or [ɑ] in some other varieties of English, for example [kəntreɪst], line 43. In the conventional spelling the first paragraph of the text transcribed below is as follows:

In every cultivated language there are two great classes of words which, taken together, comprise the whole vocabulary. First, there are those words with which we become acquainted in ordinary conversation,—which we learn, that is to say, from the members of our own family and from our familiar associates, and which we should know and use even if we could not read or write. They concern the common things of life and are the stock in trade of all who speak the language. Such words may be called “popular,” since they belong to the people at large and are not the exclusive possession of a limited class.

in evri kəltəvetəd læŋɡwɪdʒ ðɛr ɾ tu gret klæsəz əv wɜrdz hwɪʃ
 tekn təɡɛðr, kəmpraɪz ðə hol vəkæbjələri. fɜrst, ðɛr ɾ ðoʊ wɜrdz
 wɪð wɪʃ wɪ bɪkɑm əkwentəd ɪn ɔrdənɾi kɑnvɾseɪn—hwɪʃ wɪ lɜrn,
 ðæt ɪz tə sei, frəm ðə mɛmbrz əv ər on fæmli ən frəm ər fæmɪljər
 5 əsoʊɪəts, ənd wɪʃ wɪ ʃəd no ən juʒ 'ivən ɪf wɪ kʊd nɑt rɪd ɾ rɑɪt. ðe
 kənsərɪn ðə kɑmən θɪŋz əv laɪf, ənd ɾ ðə stɑk ɪn tred əv ɔl hɪ spɪk
 ðə læŋɡwɪdʒ. sɑʃ wɜrdz me bɪ kɔld “pɑpjəlɾ,” sɪnz ðe bəlɔŋ tə ðə
 pɪpl ət laɪdʒ ənd ɾ nɑt ði ɪkskluzɪv pəʒɛɪn əv ə lɪmɪtəd klæs.
 ɔn ði ʌðr hɛnd, ər læŋɡwɪdʒ ɪnkludz ə mɑltɪtʊd əv wɜrdz hwɪʃ
 10 ɾ kəmpærətɪvli sɛldəm juʒd ɪn ɔrdənɾi kɑnvɾseɪn. ðɛr mɪnɪŋz ɾ nɒn
 tu evri ɛdʒəkətəd pɜrsn, bət ðr ɪz lɪʃl əkeɪn tu ɪmpleɪ ðəm ət hom
 ɔr ɪn ðə mɑrkət-ples. ər fɜrst əkwentəns wɪð ðəm kɑmz nɑt frəm

²⁹ For a detailed treatment of gradation see J. S. Kenyon's *American Pronunciation*, pp. 144ff.

ar maðrz lips ɔr frəm ðə tɔk əv ar skulmets, bæt frəm bʏks ðæt wɪ
rid, lɛktsɪz ðæt wɪ hɪr, ɔr ðə mɔr fɔrml kənvrseʃn əv haɪlɪ ɛdʒəkətəd
15 spɪkrz, hʏ ɪ dɪskasɪŋ sɑm prɪtɪkjəlɪ tʌpɪk ɪn ə stɑɪl əprɒprɪətli ɛləvətəd
əbʌv ðɪ əbɪtʃʊəl lɛvl əv ɛvrɪdeɪ laɪf. sʌtʃ wɔrdz ɪ kɔl³⁰ "lɜrnəd," ən
ðə dɪstɪŋkʃn bɪtwɪn ðəm ən "pəpjəlɪ" wɔrdz ɪz əv gret ɪmpɔrtəns
tʏ ə raɪt ʌndrstændɪŋ əv lɪŋgwɪstɪk præsəs.

ðə dɪfɪns bɪtwɪn pəpjəlɪ ən lɜrnəd wɔrdz meɪ bɪ ɪzəli sɪn ɪn ə fju
20 əgzæmplz. wɪ meɪ dɪskraɪb ə gɜrl əz "laɪvlɪ" ɔr əz "vɪveʃəs." ɪn ðə
fɜrst kes, wɪ ɪ juʒɪŋ ə netɪv ɪŋɡlɪʃ fɔrmeʃn frəm ðə fəməljɪr naʊn
"laɪf." ɪn ðə lætr, wɪ ɪ juʒɪŋ ə lætn dərɪvətɪv hwtʃ hæz prɪsaɪslɪ ðə
sem mɪnɪŋ. jət ðɪ ætməsɪr əv ðə tu wɔrdz ɪz kwaɪt dɪfɪnt. nɔ wʌn
ɛvr gæt ðɪ ædʒɪktɪv "laɪvlɪ" aut əv ə bʏk. ɪt əz ə paɪrt əv ɛvrɪbədɪz
25 vəkæbjələri. wɪ kænət rɪmɛmbr ə taɪm wɛn wɪ dɪd nʌt nɔ ɪt, ən wɪ
fɪl ʃʏr ðæt wɪ lɜrnd ɪt lɔŋ bɪfɔr wɪ wɪ ebl tə rɪd. ɔn ðɪ ʌðr hɛnd, wɪ
mʌst əv pæst sɛvɪl jɪr əv ar laɪvz bɪfɔr lɜrnɪŋ ðə wɔrd "vɪveʃəs."
wɪ meɪ ɪvən rɪmɛmbr ðə fɜrst taɪm wɪ sɔ ɪt ɪn prɪnt ɪ hɜrd ɪt frəm sɑm
grɒnʌp frɛnd hʏ wəz tɔkɪŋ ovɪ ar tʃaɪldɪʃ hɛdʒ. bɔθ "laɪvlɪ" ən
30 "vɪveʃəs" ɪ gʏd ɪŋɡlɪʃ wɔrdz, bæt "laɪvlɪ" ɪz "pəpjəlɪ" ən "vɪveʃəs"
ɪz "lɜrnəd."

.....
ɛvrɪ ɛdʒəkətəd pɜrsən hæz ət lɪst tu wez əv spɪkɪŋ ɪz maðr tʌŋ.
ðə fɜrst ɪz ðæt hwtʃ ɪ ɪmpleɪz ɪn ɪz fæmlɪ, əmʌŋ ɪz fəməljɪr frɛndz,
ænd ɔn ɔrdnəri əkeɪz. ðə sɛkənd ɪz ðæt hwtʃ ɪ juʒəz ɪn dɪskɔrsɪŋ
35 ɔn mɔr kəmplɪkətəd sʌbdʒɪkts, ænd ɪn ədresɪŋ pɜrsnz wɪð hum ɪ
ɪz lɛs ɪntəmətli əkwentəd. ɪt ɪz, ɪn ʃɔrt, ðə lɛŋɡwɪdʒ wɪtʃ ɪ ɪmpleɪz
wɛn ɪ əz "ɔn ɪz dɪɡnɪtɪ," æz ɪ pʊts ɔn ɪvɪŋ dres wɛn ɪ ɪz goɪŋ aut tə
daɪn. ðə dɪfɪns bɪtwɪn ðɪz tu fɔrmz əv lɛŋɡwɪdʒ kənsɪsts, ɪn gret
mɛʒr, ɪn ə dɪfɪns əv vəkæbjələri. ðə besəs əv fəməljɪr wɔrdz mʌst bɪ
40 ðə sem ɪn bɔθ, bæt ðə vəkæbjələri əprɒprɪət tʏ ðə mɔr fɔrml əkeɪz
wɪl ɪnklud mɛnɪ tɜrmz hwtʃ wəd bɪ stɪltəd ɪ əfɛktəd ɪn ɔrdnəri tɔk.
ðɪ ɪz ɔlso kənsɪdɪrəbl dɪfɪns bɪtwɪn fəməljɪr ən dɪɡnɪfaɪd lɛŋɡwɪdʒ ɪn
ðə mænər əv ʌtərəns. kəntrest ðə ræpɪd ʌtərəns əv ar ɛvrɪdeɪ daɪə-
lɛkt, fʊl əv kəntɾækʃnz ən klɪpt fɔrmz, wɪð ðə mɔr dɪstɪŋkt ɪnʌnsɪʃn

³⁰ In the phrase "called popular," line 7, the closure for [d] is made and is then held while the lips make the closure for [p]; there is only one explosion, that of the [p]. In the phrase "called learned" the [d] of *called* can only be exploded if one speaks very slowly; in more rapid speech we are likely to omit the stop altogether. If this is done the [l] of *called* may be prolonged, and this prolongation may be indicated if desired by transcribing it [l:].

- 45 əv ðə pʊlpət r ðə plætfɔrm. ðæs, in kənvrseɪn, wɪ əbɪtʃʊəli ɪmˈplɔɪ sətʃ kəntrækʃnz əz "aɪl," "dɒnt," "wɒnt," "ɪts," "wɪd," "hɪd," ən ðə laɪk, hwɪtʃ wɪ ʃəd nəvɪr juːz ɪn pʌblɪk spɪkɪŋ, ʌnleɪs əv sɛt pəˈrɒs, tə ɡɪv ə mɑːkədli kəlɒkwɪəl tɪndʒ tə wɒt wɪ hæv tə sei.

(Transcribed from Greenough and Kittredge's *Words and their Ways in English Speech*, pp. 19, 20, 27, 28.)

23. Phonetic Classification of Modern English Sounds. The vowels of Modern English are classified phonetically, according to the principles explained above in 7-13, as follows:

	BACK VOWELS			MIXED VOWELS			FRONT VOWELS		
	Round		Unround	Unround			Round	Unround	
	Tense	Lax	Lax	Tense	Lax			Tense	Lax
High	u	ʊ					y	i	i, i ³⁶
Mid	o		ʌ ³¹	ɜ, ɜ ³⁴	ɜ	ə, ɪ ³⁵	æ	e	e
Low	ɔ ³²	ɒ ³²	ɑ ³² , ʌ ³³					ɛ	æ

The classification of the consonant sounds, according to the principles explained above in 1-5, is as follows:

³¹ [ʌ] is produced with the tongue more or less advanced from the extreme back position towards the [ə] position. In some varieties of English the vowel of *hut* has been so far advanced that it has become identical with [ə]; in the transcription of these dialects, therefore, the vowel of *hut*, *cup*, etc., is correctly represented by [ə].

³² [ɔ] and [ɒ] are produced with the tongue in the extreme back position, [ɑ] with the tongue somewhat advanced from the extreme back position. [ɔ] and [ɒ] are usually rounded; when not rounded they may be represented if necessary by an inverted ɑ.

³³ [ʌ] is produced with the tongue considerably advanced from the extreme back position.

³⁴ [ɜ] is produced with the tip of the tongue turned up towards the roof of the mouth; it is therefore called an "inverted" vowel. It occurs in the speech of those who pronounce [r] before consonants and also in the speech of some persons who do not pronounce [r] before consonants. In the speech of some persons who pronounce [r] before consonants the vowel [ɜ] is followed by an [r] sound that is produced by raising the tip of the tongue to a position closer to the roof of the mouth than the position it occupies in producing [ɜ]. See note 15 above.

³⁵ [ɪ] occurs only in unstressed syllables and in the speech of those who pronounce r before consonants. It may be described as an inverted [ə], that is [ə] produced with the tip of the tongue turned up towards the roof of the mouth. It is similar to [ɜ] but is lax instead of tense.

³⁶ [i] varies in different phonetic situations between a vowel that resembles [i] and a vowel that resembles [ɪ].

	Velar	Palatal	Dental	Labial
Stops				
Voiced	g ³⁷	g ³⁷	d	b
Voiceless	k ³⁷	k ³⁷	t	p
Spirants				
Voiced	ɣ	j	ʒ, z, ʃ	v
Voiceless	x	ç	ʃ, s, θ	f
Nasals				
Voiced	ŋ		n	m

[h] is a voiceless sound made with the tongue and lips in the position, or approaching the position, which they will occupy in producing the vowel that follows.

[j] is a spirant only when it is produced with the tongue so close to the hard palate that the passage of air thru the narrow opening causes audible friction; this is the case when [j] is followed by a high front vowel, as in *yield*. In other situations [j] is usually a voiced frictionless "glide" sound produced with the tongue moving from the [i] position to the position which it is to occupy in the formation of the vowel that follows it.

[l] is a "divided" or "lateral" consonant; it is formed by placing the point of the tongue against the ridge behind the upper front teeth or against the teeth themselves and allowing the air from the lungs to escape at the sides. A "unilateral" [l] is produced when the tongue is so placed that the air can escape at one side only. When the point of the tongue is in the position that is essential for the production of the [l] sound, the back of the tongue may be in various positions which modify more or less the quality of the sound. [l] is usually voiced but may be partly or wholly voiceless after voiceless stops, as in *play*.

[r] is produced in a variety of ways in English. In northern British English it is trilled with the tip of the tongue when a vowel follows. Some speakers of southern British English trill the [r] slightly when it occurs between vowels, as in *very*, but this is very exceptional in American English. In both British and American English there is some tendency to trill the [r] after [θ], as in *three*.

³⁷ According to some phoneticians the closure for [g] and [k] is always made against the soft palate; according to others it is made against the soft or hard palate according to the nature of the vowel that precedes or follows. It is certain that in all varieties of English there is *some* degree of accommodation of the place of the closure to the vowel that precedes or follows the stop; the closure is made farther forward when a front vowel follows, as in *gate* and *key*, than when a back vowel follows, as in *go* and *coo*.

[r] is pronounced only before vowels in southern British English, eastern New England, and the southern United States, but in northern British English and the western United States it is pronounced before consonants and before a pause as well as before vowels. All types of untrilled [r] are produced by turning the tip of the tongue up towards the ridge behind the upper front teeth or towards the hard palate. If the tip of the tongue is very close to the roof of the mouth, a certain amount of friction accompanies the production of the sound, but most types of [r] are vowel-like sounds produced with little or no friction. Initial [r] and intervocalic [r] are often made with some rounding of the lips. [r] is usually voiced but may be partly or wholly voiceless after voiceless stops, as in *pray*.

[w] is usually a voiced frictionless glide produced with the lips rounded and with the tongue moving from the [u] position to the position which it is to occupy during the production of the vowel that follows it. But when [w] is followed by a high back vowel, as in *woo*, the tongue is so close to the roof of the mouth that the passage of air thru the narrow opening causes audible friction; in this situation [w] may be described as a voiced velar spirant made with decided rounding of the lips.

[hw] is [w] preceded by a voiceless sound made while the tongue and lips are approaching the position for [w]; the beginning of the [w] may be voiceless. In some varieties of English [hw] is replaced by a voiceless [w], which may be represented phonetically by the symbol [ʍ].

PART II

THE HISTORY OF ENGLISH SOUNDS

24. Pronunciation of Old English. The pronunciation of the Old English vowels and diphthongs is shown in the following table:

OE Spelling	Pronunciation	Examples
ā	[a:]	stān, <i>stone</i> [sta:n]
a	[a]	man, <i>man</i> [man]
æ	[ɛ:]	hæþ, <i>heath</i> [hɛ:θ]
æ	[æ]	þæt, <i>that</i> [θæt]
ē	[e:]	swēte, <i>sweet</i> [swe:te]
e	[ɛ]	helpan, <i>help</i> [hɛlpan]
ī	[i:]	rīdan, <i>ride</i> [ri:dan]
i	[i]	drincan, <i>drink</i> [driŋkan]
ō	[o:]	dōn, <i>do</i> [do:n]
o	[ɔ]	crop, <i>crop</i> [krɔp]
ū	[u:]	hūs, <i>house</i> [hu:s]
u	[ʊ]	sunu, <i>son</i> [sʊnʊ]
ȳ	[y:]	fȳr, <i>fire</i> [fy:r]
y	[y]	bynne, <i>thin</i> [θynne]
ēa	[ɛ:ə]	strēam, <i>stream</i> [stre:əm]
ea	[æə]	hearpe, <i>harp</i> [hæərpe]
ēo	[e:ɔ]	bēon, <i>be</i> [be:ɔn]
eo	[ɛɔ]	weorc, <i>work</i> [weɔrk]
īe	[i:ə]	hieran, <i>hear</i> [hi:əran]
ie	[iə]	ieldra, <i>elder</i> [iəldra]

The pronunciation of the Old English consonants is shown in the following table:

OE Spelling	Pronunciation	Examples
c	[k]	cēpan, <i>keep</i> [ke:pan]
ċ ³⁸	[tʃ]	ċīdan, <i>chide</i> [tʃi:dan]

³⁸ The Old English manuscripts do not distinguish ċ from c or ġ from g; the dot is added by modern editors and is not used in the standard Old English dictionaries.

OE Spelling	Pronunciation	Examples
cg	[dʒ]	brycg, <i>bridge</i> [brydʒ]
g	[ʒ]	boga, <i>bow</i> [bɔʒa]
ġ ³⁹	[j]	ġiefan, <i>give</i> [jǣvan]
ng	[ŋg]	singan, <i>sing</i> [sɪŋgan]
sc	[ʃ]	scip, <i>ship</i> [ʃɪp]

h before consonants or after vowels is pronounced like **ch** in German *ich, nacht*; e.g., *niht* [nɪçt], *night*, *hēah* [hɛ:əx], *high*.

f and **s** are pronounced like [v] and [z] when they occur between voiced sounds, as in *ġiefan*, *give*, and *rīsan*, *rise*; like [f] and [s] when initial or final, and when they precede voiceless sounds or are doubled, as in *fæder*, *father*, *stæf*, *staff*, *sunu*, *son*, *wæs*, *was*, *hæft*, *haft*, *cyssan*, *kiss*.

þ and **ð** are used without distinction for the sounds [θ] and [ð]. They are pronounced like [ð] when they occur between voiced sounds, as in *cūðe*, *knew*; like [θ] when they are initial or final, as in *þæt*, *that*, *cūþ*, *known*.

r is strongly trilled with the tip of the tongue.

The other Old English consonants are pronounced as in Modern English. But double consonants were pronounced double, as in Modern English *pen-knife*, *book-case*, e. g. *sunne*, *sittan*.

25. Old English in Phonetic Notation. The Old English version of the parable of the Good Samaritan, Luke 10:30-35, in the Old English spelling and accompanied by a literal translation, is as follows:

Sum man fērde fram Hierusalem tō Hiericho and becōm on
A-certain man went from Jerusalem to Jericho and fell among
þā scaðan, þā hine berēafodon and tintregodon hine and forlēton
the thieves, who him robbed and tortured him and left
hine samcwicne. þā ġebyrede hit þæt sum sǣcerd fērde on
him half-alive. Then happened it that a-certain priest went on
þām ilcan weġe; and þā hē þæt ġeseah, hē hine forbēah.
the same way; and when he that saw, he from-him turned-away.
And eal swā sē dīacon, þā hē wæs wið þā stōwe and þæt ġeseah,
And all so the deacon, when he was by the place and that saw,
hē hine ēac forbēah. þā fērde sum Samaritanisc
he from-him also turned-away. Then went a-certain Samaritan

³⁹ See note 38 above.

man wið hine; þā hē hine ġeseah, ðā wearð hē mid
 man opposite him; when he him saw, then became he with
 mildheortnesse ofer hine āstýred. þā ġenēalāhte hē and wrāð
 pity over him moved. Then approached he and bound
 his wunda and on āġēat ele and wīn and hine on his niēten sette
 his wounds and in poured oil and wine and him on his beast set
 and ġelādde on his lācehūs and hine lācnodē; and brōhte oþrum
 and took into his hospital and him treated; and brought the-next
 dæġe twēġen peningas and sealde þām lāce and þus cwæð,
 day two pennies and gave to-the physician and thus said,
 "Beġiem his; and swā hwæt swā þū mære tō ġedēst,
 "Take-care-of him; and whatever thou more in-addition doest,
 þonne ic cume, ic hit forġielde þē."
 when I come, I it will-repay thee."

Transcribed in phonetic notation the Old English passage just given is as follows:

sum man feirdę⁴⁰ fram hjeruzalem to: hjerikę and be'kóm on θa: saðan,
 θa: hine be'reiævqdę and tįtřęqdę hine and for'leitęn hine sam-
 kwiknę. θa: je'byrędę hit θæt sum saikerd feirdę on θam ilkan weje;
 and θa: he: θæt je'sæx, he: hine for'beiæx. and æl swa: sei: dirakę, θa:
 he: wæs wiθ θa: storiwe and θæt je'sæx, he: hine eak for'beiæx. θa:
 feirdę sum samaritaniſ man wiθ hine; θa: he: hine je'sæx, θa: wæarθ
 he: mid mildheortnesse ofer hine a'styred. θa: je'neiæle:ctę he: and
 wraiθ his wunda and on a'jeiæt eļ and win and hine on his niēten
 sette and je'leidde on his leitſehūs and hine la:knodę; and broixtę
 o:ðrum dæje tweiġen peningas and sæalde θam leitſę and θys kwæθ,
 "be'jiuam his; and swa: hwæt swa: θu: marę to: je'deist, θonne itſ
 kumę, itſ hit for'jieldę θe:."

26. Normal Development of Old English Vowels. The normal development⁴¹ of the Old English vowel sounds in the East Midland dialect of Middle English and of the Middle English sounds in Modern English is shown in the following table:

⁴⁰ The accent is on the first syllable unless otherwise indicated.

⁴¹ The normal development of a vowel is that which took place when its development was not affected by the influence of neighboring sounds or by changes of quantity. An account of the changes that took place in the English vowel sounds as a result of these special conditions will be found below in sections 27 and 28.

	Old English ⁴²			Middle English		Modern English	
ā	[a:]	stān	[sta:n]	[ɔ:]	ston	[stɔ:n]	[o:] [sto:n]
a	[a]	crabba	[krabba]	[ɑ]	crabbe	[krabbə]	[æ] [kræb]
æ	[æ]	þæt	[θæt]	[ɑ]	that	[θat]	[æ] [ðæt]
ǣ	[ɛ:]	hǣþ	[hɛ:θ]	[ɛ:]	heeth	[hɛ:θ]	[i:] [hi:θ]
ē	[e:] ⁴³	swēte	[swe:tɛ]	[e:] ⁴³	swete	[swe:tə]	[i:] [swi:t]
e	[ɛ]	helpan	[hɛlpən]	[ɛ]	helpe(n)	[hɛlpən]	[ɛ] [hɛlp]
i	[i:] ⁴³	riðan	[ri:ðan]	[i:] ⁴³	ride(n)	[ri:dən]	[ai] [raid]
i	[i]	drincan	[driŋkan]	[i]	drinke(n)	[driŋkən]	[i] [driŋk]
ō	[o:] ⁴³	fōda	[fo:ða]	[o:] ⁴³	fode	[fo:ðə]	[u:] [fu:d]
o	[ɔ]	oxa	[ɔksɑ]	[ɔ]	oxe	[ɔksə]	[ɑ] ⁴⁴ [aks]
ū	[u:] ⁴³	hūs	[hu:s]	[u:] ⁴³	hous	[hu:s]	[au] [haus]
u	[ʊ]	sunu	[sʊnʊ]	[ʊ]	sone	[sʊnə]	[ʌ] [sʌn]
ȳ	[y:]	mȳs	[my:s]	[i:]	mis	[mi:s]	[ai] [mais]
y	[y]	fyllan	[fyllan]	[i]	fille(n)	[fɪllən]	[i] [fɪl]
ēa	[ɛ:ə]	strēam	[stre:əm]	[ɛ:]	streem	[stre:ɪm]	[i:] [stri:m]
ea	[æə]	earm	[æərm]	[ɑ]	arm	[ɑrm] ⁴⁵	
ēo	[e:ɔ]	dēop	[de:ɔp]	[e:] ⁴⁶	deep	[de:p]	[i:] [di:p]
eo	[ɛo]	heorte	[hɛortɛ]	[ɛ] ⁴⁶	herte	[hɛrtə] ⁴⁵	

⁴² The Old English sounds which are taken as the basis of this table are those of the **Mercian** dialect, which was that from which the Midland dialect of Middle English was derived. The sounds of the **Mercian** dialect differed in certain respects from those of **West-Saxon** (WS), which is the dialect in which most of the Old English literature is preserved and upon which the Old English dictionaries are based. For example, the Mercian dialect did not contain the early West-Saxon (EWS) diphthongs **ie** and **ie**, and it had the vowel **ē** in many words which in West-Saxon have the vowel **æ**; e.g., WS **dǣd** was Mercian **dēd**. In the Mercian dialect the vowel **ǣ** was always the result of umlaut.

⁴³ The Modern English sounds given as the equivalents of Old and Middle English [e:], [i:], [o:] and [u:] are only approximate equivalents, for (as explained above in note 8) the Modern English sounds represented by [e:], [i:], [o:], and [u:] tend to be diphthongs, not simple vowels. Old and Middle English [e:], [i:], [o:] and [u:] were simple vowels, like the corresponding vowels in Modern German.

⁴⁴ ME [ɔ], or a vowel much like it, has been preserved in the speech of England and eastern New England, but it has become [a] in most parts of the United States.

⁴⁵ The Modern English development of the vowel in this word is a special development due to the **r** that follows it; see 28, 1 below.

⁴⁶ OE **ēo** and **eo** first changed to early ME [æ:] and [œ], which developed later into [e:] and [ɛ].

The following table shows the normal development in Modern English of certain sounds which developed in the Midland dialect of Middle English as the result of certain special conditions which will be explained below in section 27.

Middle English		Modern English	
[ɑ:] name	[nɑ:mə]	[e:]	[neim]
[au] faught	[fauxt]	[ɔ:]	[fɔ:t]
[æi] seil	[sæil]	[e:]	[seil]
[ɛu] fewe	[fɛuə], shrewe [ʃrɛuə]	[ju:] or [u:]	[fju:], [ʃru:]
[ju] humour	[hjumur], rude [rjudə]	[ju:] or [u:]	[hju:mr], [ru:d]
[qi] boy	[bqi]	[qi]	[bqi]
[ɔ:u] soule	[sɔ:ulə]	[o:]	[so:l]
[qu] thought	[θquxt]	[ɔ:]	[θɔ:t]

27. Special Developments in Middle English. The most important special developments of the Old English vowel sounds in the East Midland dialect of Middle English are as follows:

1. Changes in the quantity of vowels.

a. Shortening of long vowels. Old English long vowels were shortened in early Middle English, before the change of [ɑ:] to [ɔ:], when they were followed by a double consonant or by a group of two or more consonants;⁴⁷ e. g. OE *sōfte*, ME *softe* [sɔftə]; OE *fīta*, ME *fifte* [fiftə]; OE *cēpte*, ME *kepte* [keptə]; OE *wisdom*, ME *wisdom* [wɪzdoim].

Old English long vowels were also shortened in Middle English when they occurred in the first syllable of trisyllabic words which contained no syllable having a secondary accent; e. g. OE *sūðerne*, ME *sutherne* [sʊðərnə]; OE *hāligdæg*, ME *holidai* [hɔlɪdæi]; late Mercian OE *ālder-man* (EWS *ealderman*), ME *alderman* [aldərmən]. The shortening of long vowels in trisyllabic words began before the change of [ɑ:] to [ɔ:] (cf. *alderman* above), and affected all words in which the conditions for its occurrence existed at that time. But long vowels were not shortened in trisyllabic words that contained a secondary accent. Later, however, many of these words lost their secondary accent and thus became subject to the shortening that had not occurred earlier, so that, as in *holiday*, we find [ɔ] instead of [ɑ] as the shortening of Old English [ɑ:].

⁴⁷ Shortening of long vowels did not take place, however, before the consonant groups (see note 48 below) which caused lengthening in late Old English.

The shortening of Old English *ǣ* and *ēa* appears in Middle English as both *a* and *e*; e. g. OE *læssa*, ME *lasse*, *lesse*; OE *lædde*, ME *ladde*, *ledde*; OE *hēafdes*, g.s., ME *hafdes*, *hefdes*.

b. Lengthening of short vowels.⁴⁸ In the thirteenth century the short vowels *a*, *e*, and *o* were lengthened in open syllables of dissyllabic words,⁴⁹ so that *a* became [aɪ],⁵⁰ *e* became [ɛɪ], and *o* became [ɔɪ]; e. g., OE *nama*, ME *name* [nɑ:mə]; OE *fæder*, ME *fader* [fɑ:ɪdər]; OE *mete*, ME *mete* [mɛ:ɪtə]; OE *stolen*, ME *stole(n)* [stɔ:ɪlən].

Shortening or lengthening of vowels often occurred in some forms of a word but not in others because the phonetic environment of the vowel in different forms of the same word was different. For example, the shortening of long vowels before consonant groups did not occur in dissyllables if the consonant group was of such a nature that the syllable division came between the vowel and the consonant group. The shortening therefore occurred in ME *gast* [gʌst] from OE *gāst* but not in the inflected forms of the word, e.g. ME *gostes* [gɔ:stəs], genitive singular, from OE *gāstes*. No shortening occurred in ME *sori* [sɔ:ri] from OE *sāriġ*, but shortening did occur (after loss of secondary stress on the second syllable) in the trisyllabic plural form *sorie* [sɔ:rjə]. Similarly, in ME *fader* from OE *fæder* the vowel [a] was in an open syllable and was lengthened, but no lengthening occurred in the plural form *fadres* or *faderes* because here the vowel either was not in an open syllable or the word was trisyllabic. After

⁴⁸ In late Old English all short vowels were lengthened when they were followed by *ld*, *mb*, *nd*, *ng*, *rd*, *rl*, *rn*, [rz], or [rð]. Lengthening did not occur, however, before the consonant group if a third consonant followed, so that we have MnE [tʃaɪld] from late OE *cild*, ME [tʃi:ld], but MnE [tʃɪldrən] from OE *cildru*, ME [tʃɪldrən]; MnE [haʊnd] from late OE *hūnd*, but MnE [hændrəd] from OE *hundred*. Many long vowels which originated in this way remained long thruout the Middle English period and have developed in Modern English like the other Middle English long vowels; e.g., late OE *fēld*, ME *feeld* [fe:ld], MnE [fi:ld]; late OE *findan*, ME *finde(n)* [fi:ndən], MnE [foɪnd]; late OE *grūnd*, ME *ground* [gru:nd], MnE [graʊnd]. Modern English [o:ld] is from Midland Middle English [ɔ:ld], which developed regularly from late Old English *āld*, earlier *ald* (West-Saxon *eald*). But in a great many words these lengthened vowels were shortened in Middle English.

⁴⁹ An open syllable is one that ends in a vowel; in words of two or more syllables a single consonant following the vowel belongs to the following syllable.

⁵⁰ Previous to the period when short vowels were lengthened in open syllables, Old English *ā* had become [ɔ:] in Middle English, but the [aɪ] which resulted from the lengthening of [a] in open syllables never became [ɔ:ɪ].

these divergent developments had taken place, both the long and the short vowel were apt to be generalised in *all* the forms of the word, so that double forms arose: [gast] and [gɔ:st], [sɔri] and [sɔ:ri], [fɑdər] and [fa: dər]. Eventually one of the alternative forms came into general use and the other became obsolete. Modern English *ghost* is based on the Middle English form that had a long vowel, but Modern English *sorry* and *father* are based on the Middle English forms that had a short vowel; some of the modern dialects, however, still preserve the form [fe:ðər], which is based on the Middle English form that had a lengthened vowel.

2. Development of new diphthongs.

As may be seen from the table of sound changes given above in section 26, the Old English diphthongs *ēa*, *ea*, *ēo*, and *eo* became simple vowels in Middle English. In Middle English, however, there developed a new series of diphthongs: [ai], [ei], [æi], [au], [ɛu], [iu], [ɔi], [ɔ:u], and [qu].

The principal sources of these diphthongs in the Midland dialect were as follows:

[ai] developed out of Old English *æ* followed by [j], spelled *g*; e. g., OE *dæg* [dæj], ME *dai*; OE *sægde* [sæjde], ME *saide*. In early Middle English this diphthong had the sound of [ai], but in late Middle English it became identical with the diphthong [ei]. It is possible that the two diphthongs were levelled under [ai] or [ei], but it seems more likely that both developed into a diphthong that approximated to [æi].

[ei] developed:

(1) out of OE *ǣ* or *ē* followed by the [j] sound which was already [j] in Old English; e. g. OE *ǣg* [ɛ:j], ME *ei* [ei]; OE *twēgen* [twɛ:jən], ME *twɛien* [twɛ:jən];

(2) out of OE *e* followed by the [j] sound which was already [j] in Old English or by the [j] sound that developed in Middle English out of Old English [ɜ]; e. g. OE *weg* [we:j], ME *wey* [we:j]; OE *plega* [ple:ɜa], ME *pleie* [ple:jə];

(3) out of Middle English [ɛ] followed by [ɟ]; e. g. early ME *neh-hebur* [neɕɕəbu:ɾ] (from Mercian OE *nēhhebur*, EWS *nēahgebūr*), later ME *neighbour* [neɪəbu:ɾ].

In early Middle English this diphthong had the sound of [ei], but in late Middle English it became identical with the diphthong [ai]. It is possible that the two diphthongs were levelled under [ai] or [ei], but it

seems more likely that both developed into a diphthong that approximated to [æi].

[au] developed:

(1) out of Old English **a** followed by **w**; e. g., OE **clawu** [klawu], ME **clawe** [klauə];

(2) out of Old English **a** followed by [ɣ], spelled **g**;⁵¹ e.g., OE **dragan** [dragan], ME **drawe(n)** [drauən];

(3) out of Old English **æ** followed by **h**; e.g., Mercian OE **fæht** (EWS **feahrt**) ME **faught** [fauxt].

(4) out of Old English **ā** followed by **ht**, e.g. OE **tāhte**, ME **taughte**.

[ɛu] developed out of Old English **ēa** or **æ** followed by **w**; e.g., OE **fēawe** [fɛ:awɛ], ME **fewe** [fɛuə]; OE **lāwede** [lɛ:wɛdɛ], ME **lewed(e)** [lɛuədə].

[iu] developed:

(1) out of Old English **ī** followed by **w**; e. g. OE **stīweard**, ME **steward** [stjuard];

(2) out of Old English **ēo** followed by **w** when it remained a falling diphthong (see section 15 above); e.g. OE **cnēow**, ME **knew** [kniu].

But the commonest source of [iu] in Middle English was the French vowel [y], which was written **u**. The sound [y] did not occur in the East Midland dialect of Middle English, and therefore French loan-words which contained this sound were pronounced in this dialect with the diphthong [iu], which was the nearest English equivalent; e. g. ME **cure** [kjurə], from Old French **cure** [ky:rə].

[ɔi] occurs almost exclusively in French loan words; e. g., ME **joie** from Old French **joie**.

of boy < Dutch of

[ɔu] developed:

(1) out of Old English **ā** or **ō** followed by **w**; e. g., OE **cnāwan** [kna:wan], Middle English **knowe(n)** [knəuən]; OE **grōwan** [ɣro:wan], ME **growe(n)** [grəuən].

⁵¹ This sound, the **g** of North German **sagen**, is not a stop consonant (like **g** in *go*) but an open consonant or spirant which resembles the spirant [w] in English **woo** (see p. 18 above) but is made without any rounding of the lips.

(2) out of Old English *ā* followed by [ɣ], spelled *g*; e. g., OE *āgen* [aɣen], ME *owe(n)* [ɔuən].

(3) out of Old English *o* when it was in an open syllable followed by [ɣ]; e.g., OE *boga* [bɔɣa], ME *bowe* [bɔuə].

(4) out of Old English *ā* or *ō* followed by *h*; e.g. OE *āh* [aɪx], ME *ough* [ɔuɪx]; OE *bōh* [boɪx], ME *bough* [bɔuɪx].

(5) out of Old English *ēo* followed by *w* when it became a rising diphthong (see 15 above); e.g. OE *trēowian*, ME *trowe(n)* [trɔuən].

oy or [ou] developed out of Old English *o* or *ō*, followed by *ht*; e.g., OE *bohte*, ME *boughte* [bɔuhtə]; OE *sōhte*, ME *soghte* [squhtə].⁵²

3. Special developments resulting in [iɪ] and [uɪ].

a. Old English *i* followed by *ġ* became [iɪ]; e.g. OE *liġeþ* [lijeθ], ME *lieth* [li:əθ].

b. Old English *ē* followed by the [j] sound that developed in Middle English out of Old English [ɣ] became Middle English [ei], which developed later into Middle English [iɪ]; e. g. Mercian OE *lēgan* (WS *lēogan*), ME *leie(n)* [leiən], later *lie(n)* [li:ən]; Mercian OE *ēge* (EWS *ēage*), ME *eye* [eɪə], later *eye* or *ye* [iɪə].

c. Old English *ē* followed by *h* became [ei], which developed later into [iɪ]; e.g. Mercian OE *hēh* (EWS *hēah*), ME *heigh* [heɪç] later *high* [hi:ç]; Mercian OE *þēh* (WS *þēoh*), ME *þeigh* [θeɪç], later *thigh* [θi:ç].

d. Old English *u* followed by *ġ* became [uɪ]; e.g. OE *sugu* [suɣu], ME *sowe* [suɪə].

e. Old English *ō* followed by *ġ* became [uɪ]; e.g. OE *wōgian* [woɣian], ME *wowe(n)* [wuɪən]; OE *bōgas* [boɣas], ME *bowes* [buɪəs].

The special developments resulting in new diphthongs and in [iɪ] and [uɪ] did not all occur at the same period. The earliest to occur were those that resulted from the combination of vowels with Old English *w* and with the [j] sound that was already [j] in Old English; the next those that resulted from the combination of vowels with sounds that developed out of Old English [ɣ]; the latest those that resulted from the combination of vowels with *h*.

⁵² The *ō* of OE *sōhte* was shortened before *ht* (see 27, 1, a above).

28. Special Developments in Modern English. The normal development of the Middle English vowel sounds in Modern English has been shown above in section 26. The most important special developments that took place as the result of the influence of neighboring sounds or changes of quantity are these:

1. Special developments before **r**

Middle English [ɛ] followed by **r** often changed to [ɑ] in late Middle English or very early Modern English and later developed into [ɑ:]; e.g., ME **sterve(n)** [stɛrvən], early MnE [starv], MnE [stɑ:rv].

Middle English [ɑ] followed by **r** has become [ɑ:] in Modern English; e.g., ME **hard** [hɑrd], MnE [hɑ:rd].

Middle English [ɪr] and [ʊr] have regularly, and Middle English [ɛr] has frequently, become [ɔ:r] in Modern English; e.g., ME **first** [fɪrst], MnE [fɛ:rst]; ME **curse(n)** [kʊrsən], MnE [kɔ:rs]; ME **lernerd** [lɛrnəd], MnE [lɔ:rnəd].

Middle English [ɑ:] and [æi] followed by **r** have become Modern English [ɛ:]; ME **spare(n)** [spɑ:rən], MnE [spɛ:r]; ME **fair** [fæir], MnE [fɛ:r].

Middle English [ɛ:] has frequently been preserved before **r** in Modern English; e.g., ME **berer(n)** [bɛ:rən], MnE [bɛ:r].

[i:], [u:], and [ju:] followed by **r** are usually replaced in Modern English by [i:], [ʊ:], and [jʊ:]; e.g., MnE [hɪ:r], [pʊ:r], [pjʊ:r].

The Modern English development of Middle English [ɔ], [ɔ:], and [o:] followed by **r** is a vowel which varies between [ɔ:], [ɒ:], and [o:]; e.g., ME **port** [pɔrt], MnE [pɔ:rt], [pɒ:rt], or [pɔ:rt]; ME **more** [mɔ:rə], MnE [mɔ:r], [mɒ:r], or [mɔ:r]; ME **swor** [swɔ:r], MnE [swɔ:r], [swɒ:r], or [swɔ:r].

These special developments of vowels before **r** have been stated in terms of their results in the speech of those who pronounce **r** before consonants as well as before vowels (see under **r** in 23 above). In the speech of those who do not pronounce **r** when it is followed by a consonant the same vowels have developed except that [ɔ:] is replaced in some varieties of English by [ɜ:],⁵³ and that there is a tendency to the development of a glide [ə] sound after the vowel, resulting in [ɔə], [ɛə], etc. The words used above to illustrate the development of vowels before **r** would therefore be transcribed as follows by those who pronounce **r**

⁵³ See note 17 above.

only before vowels: [sta:v] or [staəv], [ha:d] or [haəd], [fɜ:st] or [fɜ:st], [kɜ:s] or [kɜ:s], [lɜ:məd] or [lɜ:məd], [spɛ:] or [spɛə], [fɛ:] or [fɛə], [bɛ:] or [bɛə], [hɪ:] or [hɪə], [pɹ:] or [pɹə], [pjɹ:] or [pjɹə], [pɔ:t] or [pɔət], etc., [mɔ:] or [mɔə], etc., [swɔ:] or [swɔə] etc.

It should be observed, however, that Middle English [a], [ɛ], [i], [ɔ], and [u] have usually developed normally in words in which the *r* is still followed by another vowel in Modern English; e.g. ME *carie(n)* [kariən], MnE [kæri]; ME *very* [vɛri], MnE [vəri]; ME *sirop* [sɪrɒp], MnE [sɪrəp]; ME *forest* [fɔrəst], MnE [fərəst]; ME *corage* [kɪrɑ:dʒə], MnE [kərɪdʒ]. But in some varieties of English the special development of ME [ɛ], [i], [ɔ], and [u] has occurred even in these words, resulting in [vɜ:ri], [sɜ:rəp], [fɜ:rəst], [kɜ:ɪdʒ].

2. Special developments before *l*.

Middle English [a] followed by *l* plus another consonant or final *l* did not become [æ] but was diphthongised to [au] in early Modern English; this diphthong then developed, like Middle English [au], into [ɔ:]; e.g., ME *smal* [smal], early MnE [smaul], MnE [smɔ:l]; ME *bald* [bald], early MnE [bould], MnE [bɔ:ld].⁵⁴

Middle English [ɔ] followed by *l* was diphthongised to [ɔ:u] in early Modern English; this diphthong then developed, like Middle English [ɔ:u], into Modern English [ɔ:]; e.g., ME *folk* [fɔlk], early MnE [fɔ:ulk], MnE [fɔ:k].

3. Special developments after [w].

When preceded by *w* Middle English [a] did not become [æ] but developed in the seventeenth century into [ɔ]. In British English [ɔ] has either remained or has become [ɔ:]. In American English [ɔ] has remained in some localities and in others has developed into [ɑ] or [ɔ:]. E.g. ME *water* [watər], MnE [wɔtr], [wɔ:tr], [watr]; ME *washe(n)* [wɔʃən], MnE [wɔʃ], [wɔ:ʃ], [wɔʃ]; ME *warm* [warm], MnE [wɔ:rm], [wɔ:m].

4. Development of Modern English [ɑ:].

In southern British English and in the speech of southern New England and eastern Virginia Middle English [a] has developed with more or less regularity into [ɑ:] when followed by

⁵⁴ But before *lm*, *lf*, and *lv* Middle English [a] has developed into [ɑ:], [æ:] or [ɛ:]; see 28, 4 below.

lm,	e.g.,	MnE	[kɑ:m]
lf,	"	"	[kɑ:f]
lv,	"	"	[sɑ:v]
[f], final	"	"	[tʃɑ:f]
[ð],	"	"	[fɑ:ðr]
[θ],	"	"	[pɑ:θ]
[ft],	"	"	[ɑ:ftr]
[s], final	"	"	[glɑ:s]
st,	"	"	[pɑ:st]
sk,	"	"	[ɑ:sk]
sp,	"	"	[klɑ:sp]
[sf],	"	"	[blɑ:sfi:m]
mp,	"	"	[ɛgzɑ:mpl]
nt,	"	"	[tʃɑ:nt]
nd,	"	"	[kəma:nd]
[ns],	"	"	[da:ns]
[ntʃ],	"	"	[sta:ntʃ]

In American English the great majority of these words have the vowel [æ:] or [ɛ:]; e.g. [pæ:θ] or [pɛ:θ], [æ:sk] or [ɛ:sk], etc. For the lengthening see 28, 10 below.

5. Preservation of Middle English [u:] and [ʊ].

Middle English [u:] has been preserved in Modern English before lip consonants (**b, p, m, f, v**); e.g., ME **stoupe(n)** [stu:pən], MnE [stu:p]; ME **toumbe** [tu:mbə], MnE [tu:m]. In some words this [u:] before lip consonants was shortened to [ʊ] and afterwards changed to [ʌ]; e.g., ME **shouue(n)** [ʃu:vən], MnE [ʃʌv]; ME **double** [du:bəl], MnE [dʌbl].

Middle English [ʊ] has been preserved in Modern English under the following circumstances: regularly between lip consonants and **l**; e.g., ME **bole** [bʊlə], MnE [bʊl]; ME **ful** [fʊl], MnE [fʊl]; ME **wolf** [wʊlf], MnE [wʊlf]; and frequently between lip consonants and consonants other than **l**; e.g., ME **wode** [wʊdə], MnE [wʊd]; ME **putte(n)** [pʊttən], MnE [pʊt].

6. [u:] for Middle English [ju].

Middle English [ju] has become [u:] under the following circumstances: regularly after **r**, and after **l** preceded by another consonant; e. g., ME **rude** [rjʊdə], MnE [ru:d]; ME **blew** [bliju], MnE [blu:]; and frequently

after **l**, **s**, **t**, **d**, and **n**; e.g., ME *lute* [ljutə], MnE [lu:t]; ME *Susanne* [sjuzənnə], MnE [su:zən]; ME *Tuesday* [tjuəsdeɪ], MnE (especially American) [tu:zdi], ME *due* [djuə], MnE (especially American) [du:]; ME *newe* [njuə], MnE (especially American) [nu:].

7. Shortening of Middle English [ɛɪ].

Middle English [ɛɪ] became early Modern English [eɪ] and developed later into [iɪ], but before it became [iɪ] it was often shortened when it was followed by **d**, **t**, or **θ**; e.g., ME *deed* [dɛɪd], MnE [dɛd]; ME *swete(n)* [swɛɪtən], MnE [swɛt]; ME *deeth* [dɛɪθ], MnE [dɛθ].

8. Shortening of [uɪ] from Middle English [oɪ].

After Middle English [oɪ] had become [uɪ], the [uɪ] was in a great many words shortened when it was followed by **d**, **t**, or **k**; in some words the result of this shortening is [ʊ], but in others the [ʊ] has undergone the further change of [ʊ] to [ʌ]; e.g., ME *good* [gʊɪd], MnE [gʊd]; ME *blood* [blʊɪd], MnE [blʌd]; ME *foot* [fo:ɪt], MnE [fʊt]; ME *book* [bo:ɪk], MnE [bʊk].

Another group of words which had early Modern English [uɪ], usually from Middle English [oɪ], shows a tendency to the shortening of [uɪ] to [ʊ] before **f**, **k**, **t**, **p**, **m**, and **n** which was apparently of later date than the shortening mentioned in the preceding paragraph. This tendency has not been completely carried out, for the present pronunciation of these words both in England and in the United States varies between [uɪ] and [ʊ]. The most important words belonging to this group are: **roof**, **hoof**; **spook**; **hoop**, **cooper**; **root**, **soot**; **broom**, **room**; **soon**, **spoon**. Of these words **cooper** and **room** had early Modern English [uɪ] preserved before labial consonants according to 28, 5 above.

9. Lengthening of [i] before [ç].

When [ç] in the combination [çt] was lost, a preceding [i] was lengthened to [iɪ] and was afterwards changed to [ai]; e.g., ME *right* [riçt], MnE [rait].

10. Lengthening of Middle English [ɔ] and [ɑ].

Middle English [ɔ] has frequently been lengthened in Modern English to [ɔɪ] when followed by [f], [s], or [θ]; e.g., ME *of* [ɔf], MnE [ɔɪf]; ME *los* [lɔs], MnE [lɔɪs]; ME *motthe* [mɔθθə], MnE [mɔɪθ].

In American English, Middle English [ɔ] has commonly been lengthened to [ɔ:] when followed by [ŋ]; e.g., ME **long** [lɔŋg], MnE [lɔ:ŋ]. There has also been a tendency to the lengthening of Middle English [ɔ] before **d**, [g], and [k], so that in these words pronunciation varies between [ɔ] or [a] and [ɔ:]; e.g., ME **God** [gɔd], MnE [gɔd], [gad], [gɔ:d]; ME **frogge** [frɔggə], MnE [frɔg], [frag], [frɔ:g]; ME **mokke(n)**, MnE [mɔk], [mak], [mɔ:k].

There has also been some tendency in American English to the lengthening of [æ] from Middle English [a] not only in the words dealt with in 28, 4 above but also in many words in which the vowel is followed by **d**, [g], **m**, **n**, or [ŋ]; the vowel resulting from this lengthening is [æ:] or [ɛ:]; e.g., ME **glad** [glad], MnE [glæ:d] or [glɛ:d]; ME **bagge** [baggə], MnE [bæ:g] or [bɛ:g]; ME **lamb** [lamb], MnE [læ:m] or [lɛ:m]; ME **land** [land], MnE [lænd] or [lɛnd], ME **sang** [saŋg], MnE [sæ:ŋ] or [sɛ:ŋ].

It is important to notice that all of the shortenings and lengthenings treated in 28, 7-10 involve a change in the *quality* as well as the *quantity* of the vowel affected.

29. Vowels in Unaccented Syllables. The sound changes which have been explained in the preceding sections are those which were undergone by vowels in accented syllables. A detailed account of the changes undergone by vowels in unaccented syllables would involve complexities of treatment which would be inconsistent with the scope and character of this book. The following account aims only at giving the barest essentials.

I. Middle English changes.

1. Unaccented Old English **a**, **e**, **o**, and **u** became a vowel which was usually written **e** and which probably (cf. 32 below) approximated in sound to [ə]; e.g., OE **oxa** [ɔksa], ME **oxe** [ɔksə]; OE **belle** [belle], ME **belle** [belle]; OE **nacod** [nakod], ME **naked** [na:kəd]; OE **sunu** [sunu], ME **sune** [sune]. This development was completed by the year 1100 in the Southern dialect, at least as early or earlier in the Midland dialect, and perhaps as early as the year 1000 in the Northern dialect.

But unaccented Old English **i** remained Middle English [i]; e.g., OE **englisc** [ɛngliʃ], ME **english** [ɛngliʃ]; OE **scilling** [ʃilling], ME **shilling** [ʃilling].

In unaccented prefixes, however, Old English *o* (except in the prefix *on-*) and *u* remained unchanged, but Old English *æ* and *ā* became [a], *e* usually became [i], *on* became [a], and *ym* became [ʊm]; e.g., OE *forberan*, ME *forbere(n)*; OE *fulfyllan*, ME *fulfille(n)*; OE *ætstandan*, ME *atstande(n)*; OE *ārisan*, ME *arise(n)*; OE *becuman*, ME *bicume(n)*; Mercian OE *ondrēdan* (WS *ondrædan*), ME *adrede(n)*; OE *ymbstōdon* (preterit plural of *ymbstandan*), ME *umbistode(n)*.

2. There was a tendency in certain phonetic situations, especially before *r*, *l*, *h*, and *w*, to the development of glide vowels. The vowel that developed was usually *e* [ə] but before *h* and *w* it was usually [ʊ] or [ɤ]; e.g., OE *glædra*, ME *gladre*, *gladere*; OE *æfre*, ME *evre*, *evere*; OE *burh*, ME *burh*, *buruh*; OE *folgian* [fɔlɣian], ME *folwie(n)*, *folwe(n)*, *folowe(n)*.

3. Final *e* usually disappeared at a fairly early period in Middle English in words of three syllables which contained no secondary stress; e.g., OE *ælmesse*, ME *almesse*, later *almes*; OE *lufode*, ME *luvede*, later *luved*; OE *frēondscipe*, ME *frendshipe*, later *frendship* (but *frendshipe* when the secondary stress on the second syllable was retained); OE *æfre*, ME *evere* (according to 29, 2 above), later *ever*; OE *glædra*, ME *gladere* (according to 29, 2 above), later *gladder*.

4. Middle English medial *e* was frequently syncopated in words of three syllables; e.g., OE *muncas*, ME *munekes*, later *munkes*; OE *stedefæst*, ME *stedefast*, later *stedfast*; Mercian OE *nēhhebbūr* (EWS *nēahgebbūr*), ME *neighebur*, later *neighbour* [neɪɰbuɪr]. In four syllable words which ended in *e* and which had a secondary stress on the third syllables, there first occurred syncopation of an *e* in the second syllable and later, after loss of the secondary stress on the third syllable, loss of final *e* according to 29, 3 above; e.g., OE *mynecene*, ME *minechene*, later *minchene*, later *minchen*; OE *gaderode*, ME *gaderede*, later *gadrede*, later *gadred*.

II. Modern English changes.

1. Final *e*, i. e. [ə], was universally lost at the end of the Middle English period. But final [ɪ] and the final [e] or [eɪ] which occurred in numerous French loan-words have become Modern English [ɪ]; e.g., ME *holy* [hɔli], MnE *holy* [ho:li]; ME *pitee* [pɪte] or [pɪte:ɪ], MnE *pity* [pɪti].

2. Syncopation of the [ə] in the ending -es has occurred universally except after [s], [z], [ʃ], [tʃ], and [dʒ]; e.g., ME *thinges* [θɪŋgəs], *bokes* [boɪkəs], *fishes* [fɪʃəs]; MnE [θɪŋz], [bʊks], [fɪʃəz].

Syncopation of the [ə] in the verbal ending -ed has occurred universally except after [d] and [t]; e.g., ME *loved*, *loked*, *wedded*; MnE [lʌvd], [lʊkt], [wɛdəd].

Middle English [ær] has become [r], Middle English [əl] has usually become [l], and Middle English [ən] has to a large extent become [n]; e.g., ME *better*, *gospel*, *ride(n)*; MnE [betr], [gʌspl], [rɪdn]. In the speech of those who pronounce [r] only before vowels, [r] is replaced by [ə], e.g., MnE [bətə].

3. Extensive qualitative changes took place in the vowels of syllables which were either unstressed in Middle English or which, through loss of the primary or secondary stress which they had in Middle English, became unstressed syllables in Modern English. The final result of these changes has been (to speak in the most general terms) that nearly all vowel sounds in syllables which have neither primary nor secondary stress have been reduced in colloquial Modern English to [ə] or [ɪ]. The distribution of unstressed [ə] and [ɪ] is very far from uniform. The following examples are intended merely to illustrate the nature of these qualitative changes but not to be representative in the sense of exemplifying all the changes that occurred:

Middle English	Modern English
<i>acordant</i> [akɔrdant]	[əkɔɪrdənt]
<i>confessioun</i> [kɔnfessiʊn]	[kənfeʃən]
<i>corage</i> [kʊrɑ:dʒə]	[kærɪdʒ]
<i>curteisie</i> [kʊrtæizi:ə]	[kɛərɪtəzi]
<i>felowshipe</i> [felauʃɪpə]	[feləʃɪp]
<i>honour</i> [ɔnu:ɪr]	[ənɪ]
<i>welcome</i> [welkʊmə]	[welkəm]
<i>wisdom</i> [wɪzdɔɪm]	[wɪzdəm]

For a fuller treatment of the Modern English changes that took place in the vowels of unstressed syllables see Jespersen's *Modern English Grammar*, Part I, Chapter IX.

30. **Consonant Sounds.** The most important changes that have taken place in the consonant sounds of English are these:

1. Middle English changes.

Old English final **m** in unstressed syllables became late Old English or very early Middle English **n**; e.g., OE **endum**, ME **ende(n)**.

Final **n** was very frequently lost in unstressed syllables, so that the common inflectional ending **-en** was very often reduced to **-e**; e.g., OE **singan**, ME **singen** or **singe**.

Old English initial **hn**, **wl**, **hl**, and **hr** became Middle English **n**, **l**, **l**, and **r**; e.g., OE **hnecca**, ME **necke**; OE **wlispian**, ME **lispe(n)**; OE **hlāf** ME **lof**; OE **hring**, ME **ring**.

Final **ċ** [tʃ] was lost in unstressed syllables; e.g., OE **ānlic**, ME **onli** [ɔnh]; OE **dēadlic**, ME **dedly** [dɛdh].

Old English [ɣ] always underwent change in Middle English:

a. Initial Old English [ɣ] became Middle English [g]; e. g., OE **gōd** [ɣoid], ME **good** [goɪd].

b. When preceded by a vowel Old English [ɣ] became Middle English [j] or [w]. If it was preceded in Old English by a front vowel and followed by a back vowel, it became [j] in Middle English after the following back vowel had become [ə]; e.g., Mercian OE **lēgan** (WS **lēogan**), ME **leie(n)**, later **lie(n)** [li:ən]; Mercian OE **ēgan**, nom. plur. (EWS **ēagan**, LWS **ēgan**), ME **eien**, later **yen** [i:ən]. In the other situations in which it occurred Old English [ɣ] preceded by a vowel developed into Middle English [w]. Subsequently the Middle English [j] or [w] which had developed out of Old English [ɣ] united with the preceding vowel and underwent the developments treated above in 27, 2 and 3.

c. When preceded by a consonant Old English [ɣ] became Middle English [w]; e.g., OE **folgian**, ME **folwie(n)**, **folwe(n)**.

2. Modern English changes.

Initial [θ] changed to [ð] in a number of pronouns and particles which were commonly pronounced without stress, e.g., **the**, **they**, **them**, **thou**, **thee**, **thy**, **that**, **those**, **this**, **these**, **then**, **than**, **there**.

Final [f], [s] and [θ] became [v], [z], and [ð] if they were preceded by a vowel that was without stress or if they occurred in words that were commonly pronounced without stress in the sentence; e.g., ME **actif**, MnE [æktiv]; ME **of** [ɔf], MnE [əv];⁶⁵ ME **faces** [faisəs], MnE [feɪsəz]; ME **his** [hɪs], MnE [hɪz]; ME **with** [wɪθ], MnE [wɪð].

⁶⁵ Modern English **off** [ɔ:f] is historically the stressed form of **of**; **in** of the [f] changed to [v] because of lack of stress, but in **off** the [f] remained unchanged.

Initial **gn** and **kn** have become **n** and initial **wr** has become **r**; e.g., ME **gnawe(n)** [gnaʊən], MnE [nə:]; ME **knight** [kniçt], MnE [nait]; ME **write(n)** [writən], MnE [rait].

Final **mb** has been reduced to **m**; e.g., ME **domb** [dʊmb], MnE [dʌm].

Final [ŋg] has been reduced to [ŋ]; e.g., ME **thing** [θiŋg], MnE [θiŋ].

l has been lost before **k** and the lip consonants **m** and **f** when the vowel that preceded it was Middle English [a] or [ɔ]; e.g., ME **talke(n)** [talkən], MnE [tɔ:k]; ME **folk** [fɔlk], MnE [fo:k]; ME **palm** [palm], MnE [pæ:m] or [pa:m]; ME **half** [half], MnE [hæ:f] or [ha:f].

[x] and [ç] have been lost in Modern English; e.g., ME **saugh** [saux], MnE [sɔ:]; ME **night** [niçt], MnE [nait].⁵⁶

Middle English double consonants became single in Modern English; e.g., ME **sonne** [sunnə], MnE [sʌn]; ME **sitte(n)**, MnE [sɪt].

[sj] and [zj] have become [ʃ] and [ʒ]; e.g., early MnE **special** [spesjʌl], MnE [speʃl]; early MnE **mission** [mɪsjʊn], MnE [mɪʃən]; early MnE **portion** [pɔrsjʊn], MnE [pɔ:ʃən],⁵⁷ early MnE **vision** [vizjʊn], MnE [viʒən].

[tj] and [dj] have become [tʃ] and [dʒ]; e.g., early MnE **fortune** [fɔrtjʊn], MnE [fɔ:rtʃən]; early MnE **cordial** [kɔrdjʌl], MnE [kɔ:rdʒl].

r in Modern English has lost its trilled sound and has become a vowel-like sound which in some varieties of English is pronounced only before vowels.

⁵⁶ In some words Middle English [x] has become [f] in Modern English; e.g., ME **laughe(n)** [lauxən], MnE [læ:f] or [lɑ:f]; ME **tough** [tu:x], MnE [tʌf]; in these words the vowel has also been modified in a special way; in the examples just given ME [au] has become [æ:] or [ɑ:] instead of [ɔ:], and ME [u:] has been shortened to [ʌ].

⁵⁷ The suffix **-tion** is merely a Latinised spelling of the suffix which was spelled **-cioun** or **-cion** in Middle English.

PART III

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF MIDDLE ENGLISH INFLECTIONS

31. Old and Middle English Inflections. The inflectional system of Old English was rather complex; there were four or five cases: nominative, genitive, dative, accusative, and sometimes instrumental; two numbers, singular and plural; and three genders, which, like those of Modern German, were largely independent of sex. The inflectional system of the late Middle English of Chaucer, on the other hand, was extremely simple. All distinctions of case were lost in Middle English except the genitive singular in nouns, and the distinctions of grammatical gender were lost altogether. And even the grammatical categories that remained were more simply expressed, for in late Middle English the single ending **-es** had replaced the variety of endings which had indicated the genitive singular and the plural of nouns in Old English. The simplification that took place in the inflectional system was the result of two causes, **sound-change** and **analogy**.

32. Sound-Change. The sound-changes that take place in accented syllables usually have little or no effect on the inflectional system of the words in which they occur. The changes that take place in the pronunciation of unaccented syllables, however, very frequently (tho not necessarily) do result in a modification of the inflectional system. The inflectional pattern of the language was very little modified by the sound-changes that took place in accented syllables during the Middle English period (shown above in sections **26** and **27**) but was profoundly affected by the changes that took place in the vowels of unaccented syllables. These changes may be briefly stated as follows:

Old English *a*, *e*, *o*, and *u* became in unaccented syllables the vowel which was commonly written *e* and which probably was pronounced [ə],⁵⁸ e.g.

OE <i>belle</i> [belle]	ME <i>belle</i> [belle]
OE <i>oxa</i> [oksə]	ME <i>oxe</i> [oksə]
OE <i>nacod</i> [nakod]	ME <i>naked</i> [na:kəd]
OE <i>sunu</i> [sunu]	ME <i>sune</i> [sune]

This change in the pronunciation of vowels of unaccented syllables is the most important difference between Old English and Middle English.

The effect on the inflectional system of these changes in the quality of unaccented vowels can be appreciated only after a thoro study of the forms tabulated below in sections 35-63, but it may be illustrated by considering the more obvious effects that are shown in the inflection of the Old English feminine noun *lufu* (section 38). In this noun the Old English distinction between nominative singular *lufu* [lufu], genitive-dative-accusative singular *lufe* [lufe], and nominative-genitive-accusative plural *lufa* [lufa] were obliterated in Middle English, for all three forms became *luve* [luve], a form distinctive as to neither number or case.

The Middle English fate of the dative plural *lufum* [lufum] of this same noun shows the far-reaching effects on the inflectional system that resulted from another sound-change that took place in unaccented syllables. In very late Old English final *m* changed in unaccented syllables to *n*. At the very beginning of the Middle English period final *n*, including the *n* that had developed from original *m*, tended to disappear in unaccented syllables (see section 30, 1 above). As the result of this change of *m* to *n*, the loss of *n*, and the change in the quality of the unaccented vowel, the Old English dative plural form *lufum* became Middle English *luven* or *luve*. From this it can be seen that the mere process of sound change resulted in extensive modification of the inflectional system. The inflectional pattern even of the earliest Middle English is radically different from that of Old English.

⁵⁸ This unstressed vowel (when followed by a consonant, as in the endings *-es* and *-ed*) was also frequently written *i*, particularly in the North of England; it is probable that this variation of spelling represents a variation of pronunciation between [ə] and [i]. Much less frequently it is written *u* when followed by a consonant (as in the endings *-es* and *-ed*); this spelling is believed to represent a rounded variety of the [ə] sound.

33. Analogy. The inflectional forms that appear in the earliest documents that we can call Middle English (e.g., the homilies in MSS Bodley 343 and Cotton Vespasian DXIV) can for the most part be accounted for on the basis of the sound-changes that took place in unaccented syllables. In later texts, however, we find occurring with increasing frequency forms that cannot be accounted for in this way. In the inflection of feminine nouns like *luve*, for example, we find the form *luves* appearing as genitive singular and as plural. In the inflection of masculine nouns like *doom* we find the uninflected form appearing in phrases which in the earliest Middle English had the specifically dative form *doome*. These changes were not the result of sound-change, for there was no general tendency in Middle English to add *s* to words that did not originally have it nor does Middle English of this period and dialect show any general tendency to loss of final *e*. Changes of this kind are the result not of sound-change but of those processes that we designate by the term analogy. Analogy is easier to illustrate than to define. It is a process that is constantly operating in speech. When we use in the plural a noun (*assonance*, for example) that we happen never to have used or to have heard others use before in the plural, or when a child uses the plural form *mans* or the preterit *hurted*, it is analogy that supplies the form that is used. The *result* of the process that operates in these cases can be shown schematically by a proportion; *assonances* : *assonance* :: *alliances* : *alliance* (*chances* : *chance*, *dunces* : *dunce*, etc.); *mans* : *man* :: *cans* : *can* (*pins* : *pin*, *lambs* : *lamb*, etc.); *hurted* : *hurt* :: *wanted* : *want* (*waited* : *wait*, *needed* : *need*, etc.). But altho such a proportion furnishes a satisfactory *logical* explanation of analogy formations it does not represent correctly the psychological process. When we make analogy formations in our speech we are not conscious of the fact that we are making them and we are not conscious of any process of comparison. The psychology of analogy formations has never been adequately investigated, but it seems correct to say in general terms that when we make an analogy formation an established speech habit functions unconsciously in a situation which is similar to but not identical with situations in which it has functioned before.⁵⁹ For example, it is a firmly

⁵⁹ I do not mean to imply that this statement is true of all the phenomena that psychologists and students of language include under the general term analogy. In fact I believe that many of these phenomena, including such "contaminations" as *evoid* for *evade* (cf. *avoid*) and most of the phenomena referred to by Thumb and Marbe in their *Experimentelle untersuchungen über die psychologischen grundlagen der*

established habit, when we speak of two or more things whose name ends in the sound [s] to use the name in the form [-səz]. This habit is so thoroly established by years of exercise that it functions as readily when we have occasion to say *assonances* for the first time as it does when we say *chances* or *pieces* for the thousandth time.

An analogy formation such as *assonances* is "correct," that is, it is the form that anyone would use who had occasion to use that word in the plural, for it conforms to the traditional usage of our speech. Analogy formations like *mans* and *hurted* are "incorrect," that is, they are very rarely used except by young children whose speech habits are not yet perfectly conformed to those of the older persons from whom they receive the tradition of speech. But the psychological process that operates in the two kinds of analogy formations is identical. Analogy formations like *mans* and *hurted* occur in the speech of adults only as "slips of the tongue." But if for any reason the same "slip" is made frequently by many persons the analogical form becomes a part of the speech tradition and is "learned" by other persons, especially younger persons whose speech habits are still in process of formation or relatively susceptible of change. Such analogy formations are likely in time to displace entirely the older traditional forms. Language, however, does not undergo numerous and extensive changes thru the operation of analogy unless the traditional patterns of speech have been radically modified by some other cause, usually sound-change. This condition did result from the sound-changes that took place in unaccented syllables at the very beginning of the Middle English period.

NOUNS

34. Development of the Middle English Noun Declensions. The historical development of the Middle English noun declensions is shown in the tables printed below. In the first column are given the Old English (Late West-Saxon) forms. In the second column are given the forms that occur in the earliest Middle English. These forms are, with one exception, historical forms, that is forms developed from those of Old English by the process of sound-change alone; they are the Old English forms pronounced in the new way. The exception is the nominative singular of

sprachlichen analogiebildungen, are the result of psychological processes essentially different from that which I believe operate in the "proportional" analogy formations with which I am particularly concerned.

nouns of the feminine \bar{o} -declension which ended in a consonant in Old English (section 39); in this type of inflection a new nominative singular **hwile** developed by analogy at the very beginning of the Middle English period. This analogical form is distinguished from the historical forms that developed thru sound-change by being printed in italic type instead of Roman. In the third column are given the late Middle English forms that occur (for example) in the language of Chaucer. In this column the forms that are identical with those of early Middle English (except the nominative singular **while**, which is the early Middle English analogical form **hwile**) are printed in Roman type and the numerous analogical forms that developed in later Middle English are printed in italic type. The words in the first column exemplify the eleven principal types of noun declension in Old English: the masculine \bar{a} -declension nouns (strong masculines) **dōm** (*judgment*) and **ende** (*end*); the \bar{u} -declension noun **sunu** (*son*); the feminine \bar{o} -declension nouns (strong feminines) **lufu** (*love*) and **hwil** (*time*); the neuter \bar{a} -declension nouns (strong neuters) **lim** (*limb*), **hors** (*horse*), and **wite** (*punishment*); the weak masculine noun **hunta** (*hunter*); the weak feminine noun **sunne** (*sun*); and the weak neuter noun **ēare** (*ear*).

In these tables the Old English forms in the first column are given in their Old English spelling, the early Middle English forms in the second column are given in their early Middle English spelling, and the late Middle English forms in the third column are given in their late Middle English spelling. These spellings must always be interpreted, however, in terms of the sounds which they represent. We frequently find changes of spelling which do not represent any corresponding change of pronunciation (e.g., Old English **dōm**, Middle English **doom**, Early Middle English **sune**, Late Middle English **son**), and changes of pronunciation which are not represented by any corresponding change of spelling (e.g., Old English **ende** [ēndē], Middle English **ende** [ēndə]).

In connection with these tables and those that will occur later it is to be understood that the forms given as early Middle English are those that occur in the earliest Southern Middle English manuscripts that we have (written during the twelfth century), and that the forms given as late Middle English are those that occur in the best Southern and Midland manuscripts of the period of Chaucer. The forms that occur in the Southern manuscripts written between about 1200 and 1350 and in the very earliest Midland manuscripts are partly the early Middle English and partly the late Middle English forms. In each dialect the proportion

of early Middle English forms is greater in the earlier manuscripts than in the later ones.

OLD ENGLISH

MIDDLE ENGLISH

Early ME

Late ME

35. *dōm*, masculine:

Sing. Nom.	<i>dōm</i>	<i>doom</i>	<i>doom</i>
Gen.	<i>dōmes</i>	<i>doomes</i>	<i>doomes</i>
Dat.	<i>dōme</i>	<i>doome</i>	<i>doom</i>
Acc.	<i>dōm</i>	<i>doom</i>	<i>doom</i>
Plur. Nom., Acc.	<i>dōmas</i>	<i>doomes</i>	<i>doomes</i>
Gen.	<i>dōma</i>	<i>doome</i>	<i>doomes</i>
Dat.	<i>dōmum</i>	<i>doome(n)</i> ⁶⁰	<i>doomes</i>

36. *ende*, masculine:

Sing. Nom.	<i>ende</i>	<i>ende</i>	<i>ende</i>
Gen.	<i>endes</i>	<i>endes</i>	<i>endes</i>
Dat.	<i>ende</i>	<i>ende</i>	<i>ende</i>
Acc.	<i>ende</i>	<i>ende</i>	<i>ende</i>
Plur. Nom., Acc.	<i>endas</i>	<i>endes</i>	<i>endes</i>
Gen.	<i>enda</i>	<i>ende</i>	<i>endes</i>
Dat.	<i>endum</i>	<i>ende(n)</i>	<i>endes</i>

37. *sunu*, masculine:

Sing. Nom.	<i>sunu</i>	<i>sune</i>	<i>sone</i>
Gen.	<i>sunā</i>	<i>sune</i>	<i>sones</i>
Dat.	<i>sunā</i>	<i>sune</i>	<i>sone</i>
Acc.	<i>sunu</i>	<i>sune</i>	<i>sone</i>
Plur. Nom., Acc.	<i>sunā</i>	<i>sune</i>	<i>sones</i>
Gen.	<i>sunā</i>	<i>sune</i>	<i>sones</i>
Dat.	<i>sunum</i>	<i>sune(n)</i>	<i>sones</i>

38. *lufu*, feminine:

Sing. Nom.	<i>lufu</i>	<i>luve</i>	<i>love</i>
Gen.	<i>lufe</i>	<i>luve</i>	<i>loves</i>
Dat.	<i>lufe</i>	<i>luve</i>	<i>love</i>
Acc.	<i>lufe</i>	<i>luve</i>	<i>lovè</i>

⁶⁰ As stated above in section 30, 1 the ending *-en* was very frequently reduced to *-e* thru the loss of the final *n*; in these tables, therefore, the ending is printed *-e(n)*.

OLD ENGLISH

Plur. Nom., Acc.	lufa
Gen.	lufa
Dat.	lufum

39. hwil, feminine:

Sing. Nom.	hwil
Gen.	hwile
Dat.	hwile
Acc.	hwile
Plur. Nom., Acc.	hwila
Gen.	hwila
Dat.	hwilum

40. lim, neuter:

Sing. Nom.	lim
Gen.	limes
Dat.	lime
Acc.	lim
Plur. Nom., Acc.	limu
Gen.	lima
Dat.	limum

41. hors, neuter:

Sing. Nom.	hors
Gen.	horses
Dat.	horse
Acc.	hors
Plur. Nom., Acc.	hors
Gen.	horsa
Dat.	horsum

42. wite, neuter:

Sing. Nom.	wite
Gen.	wites
Dat.	wite
Acc.	wite
Plur. Nom., Acc.	witu
Gen.	wita
Dat.	witum

MIDDLE ENGLISH

Early ME

luve
luve
luve(n)

hwile

hwile

hwile

hwile

hwile

hwile

hwile(n)

lim

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lime

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Late ME

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OLD ENGLISH		MIDDLE ENGLISH	
		Early ME	Late ME
43. hunta , weak masculine:			
Sing. Nom.	hunta	hunte	hunte
Gen.	huntan	hunte(n)	<i>hunte</i> s
Dat.	huntan	hunte(n)	hunte
Acc.	huntan	hunte(n)	hunte
Plur. Nom., Acc.	huntan	hunte(n)	<i>hunte</i> s
Gen.	huntena, huntan	huntene, hunte(n)	<i>hunte</i> s
Dat.	huntum	hunte(n)	<i>hunte</i> s
44. sunne , weak feminine:			
Sing. Nom.	sunne	sunne	sonne
Gen.	sunnan	sunne(n)	<i>sonne</i> s
Dat.	sunnan	sunne(n)	sonne
Acc.	sunnan	sunne(n)	sonne
Plur. Nom., Acc.	sunnan	sunne(n)	<i>sonne</i> s
Gen.	sunnena, sunnan	sunnene, sunne(n)	<i>sonne</i> s
Dat.	sunnum	sunne(n)	<i>sonne</i> s
45. ēare , weak neuter:			
Sing. Nom.	ēare	ere	ere
Gen.	ēaran	ere(n)	<i>eres</i>
Dat.	ēaran	ere(n)	ere
Acc.	ēare	ere	ere
Plur. Nom., Acc.	ēaran	ere(n)	<i>eres</i>
Gen.	ēarena, ēaran	erene, ere(n)	<i>eres</i>
Dat.	ēarum	ere(n)	<i>eres</i>

46. An analysis of the tables given above shows that the analogical changes that took place in the inflection of nouns were these:

1. The nominative singular became identical with the accusative singular in the strong feminine nouns ending in a consonant, which in Old English had different forms for the two cases.

2. The ending **-es** became the ending of the genitive singular of nouns which in Old English had other endings.

3. The dative singular became identical with the accusative singular in those nouns which in Old English had different forms for the two cases.

4. The ending **-es** became the ending of the nominative-accusative plural of those nouns which in Old English had other endings.

✓ 5. The genitive and dative plural became identical with the nominative-accusative plural.

47. **Retention and Extension of the Weak Noun Inflection.** One other statement is needed, however, to complete this account of the Middle English noun inflections. A few nouns that belonged to the Old English weak declension retained their weak inflection, at least in part, even in Late Middle English. The development of this type of inflection, as exemplified by Old English **oxa** (*ox*), is shown in the following table:

OLD ENGLISH		MIDDLE ENGLISH	
		Early ME	Late ME
Sing. Nom.	oxa	oxe	oxe
Gen.	oxan	oxe(n)	<i>oxes</i>
Dat.	oxan	oxe(n)	oxe
Acc.	oxan	oxe(n)	oxe
Plur. Nom., Acc.	oxan	oxe(n)	oxen
Gen.	oxena, oxan	oxene, oxe(n)	oxen
Dat.	oxum	oxe(n)	oxen

The weak plural inflection was frequently extended in early Middle English to nouns that were not weak nouns in Old English; e.g., OE nom. plur. **dēda**, f. (WS *dāda*), **sunu**, m., **limu**, n., **word**, n., **ċildru**, n., ME **deden**, **sunen**, **limen**, **worden**, **children**. Likewise the weak genitive plural ending **-ene** was sometimes extended to nouns that were not weak in Old English; e.g., **kingene king** *king of kings*.

48. **Declension of Adjectives.** In Old English, as in Modern German, every adjective was inflected according to either one of two declensions, the strong or the weak. The weak declension was used if the adjective was preceded by a definite article, a demonstrative, or a possessive, or if the adjective modified a noun used in direct address; the strong declension was used except under conditions that required the use of the weak. In the Middle English both declensions of the adjective were retained, but with much simplification of forms.

There were two types of strong adjectives in Old English, those ending in a consonant, like **gōd**, *good*, and those ending in **-e**, like **swēte**, *sweet*.

The historical development of the strong inflection in these two types of adjective is shown in the tables printed below. In the first column are given the Old English (Late West-Saxon) forms, in the second the historical forms that developed in the earliest Middle English by the process of sound-change, and in the third those that occur in late Middle English. In the third column the forms that are identical with the historical forms of early Middle English are printed in Roman type and the analogical forms that developed later are printed in italic type.

49. Strong Declension.

OLD ENGLISH		MIDDLE ENGLISH	
		Early ME	Late ME
Masculine:			
Sing. Nom.	<i>gōd</i>	good	good
Gen.	<i>gōdes</i>	goodes	<i>good</i>
Dat.	<i>gōdum</i>	goode(n)	<i>good</i>
Acc.	<i>gōdne</i>	goodne	<i>good</i>
Feminine:			
Sing. Nom.	<i>gōd</i>	good	good
Gen.	<i>gōdre</i>	goodre, gooder	<i>good</i>
Dat.	<i>gōdre</i>	goodre, gooder	<i>good</i>
Acc.	<i>gōde</i>	goode	<i>good</i>
Neuter:			
Sing. Nom.	<i>gōd</i>	good	good
Gen.	<i>gōdes</i>	goodes	<i>good</i>
Dat.	<i>gōdum</i>	goode(n)	<i>good</i>
Acc.	<i>gōd</i>	good	good
All Genders:			
Plur. Nom., Acc.	<i>gōde</i>	goode	goode
Gen.	<i>gōdra</i>	goodre, gooder	<i>goode</i>
Dat.	<i>gōdum</i>	goode(n)	goode
Masculine:			
Sing. Nom.	<i>swēte</i>	swete	swete
Gen.	<i>swētes</i>	swetes	<i>swete</i>
Dat.	<i>swētum</i>	swete(n)	swete
Acc.	<i>swētne</i>	swetne	<i>swete</i>

OLD ENGLISH		MIDDLE ENGLISH	
		Early ME	Late ME
Feminine:			
Sing. Nom.	swētu	swete	swete
Gen.	swētre	swetre, sweter	swete
Dat.	swētre	swetre, sweter	swete
Acc.	swēte	swete	swete
Neuter:			
Sing. Nom.	swēte	swete	swete
Gen.	swētes	swetes	swete
Dat.	swētum	swete(n)	swete
Acc.	swēte	swete	swete
All Genders:			
Plur. Nom., Acc.	swēte	swete	swete
Gen.	swētra	swetre, sweter	swete
Dat.	swētum	swete(n)	swete
50. Weak Declension.			
Masculine:			
Sing. Nom.	gōda	goode	goode
Gen.	gōdan	goode(n)	goode
Dat.	gōdan	goode(n)	goode
Acc.	gōdan	goode(n)	goode
Feminine:			
Sing. Nom.	gōde	goode	goode
Gen.	gōdan	goode(n)	goode
Dat.	gōdan	goode(n)	goode
Acc.	gōdan	goode(n)	goode
Neuter:			
Sing. Nom.	gōde	goode	goode
Gen.	gōdan	goode(n)	goode
Dat.	gōdan	goode(n)	goode
Acc.	gōde	goode	goode
All Genders:			
Plur. Nom., Acc.	gōdan	goode(n)	goode
Gen.	gōdena, gōdan	goodene, gode(n)	goode
Dat.	gōdum	goode(n)	goode

PRONOUNS

51. Declension of Personal Pronouns. The development that took place in nouns and adjectives in Middle English resulted in a very great simplification of inflections, chiefly as the result of the numerous analogy formations that were made. No such simplification of inflection took place, however, in the Middle English development of the personal pronouns. In the first and second personal pronouns there is a one-for-one correspondence between the Old English and the Middle English forms, and in the third personal pronoun there is a one-for-one correspondence except that in late Middle English there are no distinctive forms for the dative and accusative. Analogy formations played a very much smaller part in the development of the personal pronouns than in the development of nouns and adjectives.

But altho the development of the personal pronouns is simple from this point of view, it is more complex in some other respects.

One reason is that the Old English pronouns often had variant forms, any one of which might become the basis of a corresponding Middle English form. Another reason is that variant forms might develop in Middle English from the same Old English form. All of the Old English forms containing the diphthong *eo* were subject to divergent development in Middle English because of the fact that this sound developed variously, according to circumstances, into [œi] which later became [ei]; [iu]; [ɔiu]; [oi]; or [ui].

There is a more fundamental reason, however, that made for complexity in the development of the personal pronouns in Middle English. Pronominal words are in all languages particularly liable to divergent development because of the fact that they have "strong" forms, which are used when the word is strongly stressed, and "weak" forms, which are used when the word is weakly stressed (cf. Modern English [hɪm] and [ɪm]). These strong and weak forms are never phonetically identical. If the strong form has a long vowel, the corresponding weak form will have a half-long or short vowel, which may be of the same quality as that of the stressed form or of slightly different quality. If the strong form has a short vowel, the vowel of the weak form will be shorter and possibly obscured (cf. MnE [ʌs] and [əs]).

Now when we consider that the strong forms of pronouns are stressed syllables and that the weak forms are unstressed syllables; that the sound-changes that take place in stressed syllables are seldom identical

with those that take place in unstressed syllables; and that the sound-changes undergone by long vowels are frequently different from those undergone by short vowels, we see that when pronouns are affected by sound-change the resulting strong and weak forms are apt to be less similar than they were before the sound-change took place. But if the dissimilarity is great, either the strong or the weak form is likely to be modified by becoming assimilated to the other, so that similarity between the two is restored. In Old English, for example, the nominative singular of the first personal pronoun was [itʃ], which was also the early Middle English stressed form. In Middle English, however, final [tʃ] was lost in unstressed syllables, so that the unstressed form of the pronoun became [i]. From this weak form a new strong form [i:] was then developed, and from this strong form there probably developed in late Middle English a new weak form with half-long [i]. Thru such processes as these strong and weak forms are continually multiplying each other, and the results of sound-changes are repeatedly modified by assimilation of strong forms to weak or vice-versa. (Cf. 101 below.)

The tables in the following sections show the historical development of the stressed forms of the personal pronouns in Middle English.⁶¹

52. First Personal Pronoun.

	OLD ENGLISH		MIDDLE ENGLISH
Sing. Nom.	ic	ich	[itʃ], I [i:]
Gen.	min	mi(n)	[min]
Dat.	mē	me	[meɪ]
Acc.	mē	me	[meɪ]
Plur. Nom.	wē	we	[weɪ]
Gen.	ūre	ure	[uɪrə]
Dat., Acc.	ūs	us	[uɪs], [ʊs]

53. Second Personal Pronoun. The variety of forms that occurs in the second personal pronoun is the result of the various developments that occurred in Middle English of the Old English sound combination *eo* [e:ou]. When it remained a "falling" diphthong (sec. 15 above), the Middle English development was [æ:u], which later became [e:u] and then [ju]. If it became a "rising" diphthong, it lost its first element

⁶¹ These tables do not attempt to give *all* the Middle English pronominal forms, but only the commoner and more characteristic ones. No account is taken of mere variations of spelling.

Falling *eo* [æ:u] [e:u] [i:u]
Rising *eo* [e:u] [i:u]

and then developed into [ɔɪu]. The explanation to be given of the [uɪ] in *zur* and *zu* depends on the explanation we accept as to the origin of the initial *z*. One explanation regards the *z*-forms as analogy formations developed from the [ɔɪu] forms under the influence of the nominative *ze*, with later change of [ɔɪu] into [uɪ]. {A simpler explanation is that they developed from the Middle English [ju] forms as the result of the falling diphthong becoming a rising diphthong.}

	OLD ENGLISH	MIDDLE ENGLISH	
Sing. Nom.	þū	þu	[θuɪ]
Gen.	þīn	þi(n)	[θiɪn]
Dat.	þē	þe	[θeɪ]
Acc.	þē	þe	[θeɪ]
Plur. Nom.	ġē	ze	[jeɪ]
Gen.	ēower	cower [æɪuər]; euer [eɪuər], [juər]; ower [ɔɪuər]; zur [juɪr]	
Dat., Acc.	ēow	cow [æɪu]; eu [eɪu], [ju]; ow [ɔɪu]; zu [juɪ]	

54. Third Personal Pronoun. The variety of forms that occurs in the feminine nominative and accusative singular and in the nominative and accusative plural of the third personal pronoun is the result of the various Middle English developments of the Old English diphthongs *ēo* and *ie*. When these remained falling diphthongs, they developed respectively into [æɪ], which later became [eɪ], and [iɪ]. If they became rising diphthongs, they developed respectively into [hjoɪ] and [hjeɪ] if their first elements were retained, and into [hoɪ] and [heɪ] if their first elements were lost.

	OLD ENGLISH	MIDDLE ENGLISH	Analogical forms
Masculine Singular:			
Nom.	hē	he	
Gen.	his	his	
Dat.	him	him	
Acc.	hine	hine	him ✓
Feminine Singular:			
Nom.	hēo	heo [hæɪ]; he [heɪ]; h3o [hjoɪ]; ho [hoɪ]	
	hie	hi [hiɪ]; h3e [hjeɪ]; he [heɪ]	
Gen.	hire	hire	here
Dat.	hire	hire	here
Acc.	hēo	heo [hæɪ]; he [heɪ]; h3o [hjoɪ]; ho [hoɪ]	hire, here
	hie	hi [hiɪ]; h3e [hjeɪ]; he [heɪ]	

Neuter Singular:

Nom.	hit	hit
Gen.	his	his
Dat.	him	him
Acc.	hit	hit

hit ✓

Plural (all genders):

Nom.	hēo	heo [hœɪ]; he [heɪ]; hʒo [hʒoɪ]; ho [hoɪ]
	hie	hi [hiɪ]; hʒe [hʒeɪ]; he [heɪ]
Gen.	hira, heora	hire, here
Dat.	him, heom	him, hem
Acc.	hēo	heo [hœɪ]; he [heɪ]; hʒo [hʒoɪ]; ho [hoɪ]
	hie	hi [hiɪ]; hʒe [hʒeɪ]; he [heɪ]

him, hem

The feminine nominative singular and the plural pronouns given above are those which occur in the Southern and the South-Midland dialects of Middle English, but in the Northern and the North-Midland dialects these forms began to be displaced before the end of the twelfth century by the feminine pronoun **she, sho** and the plural pronouns **þei, þeir, þeim** (later **þem**). The origin of **she, sho** is uncertain, some scholars deriving it from Old English **sēo**, the feminine nominative singular of the demonstrative, and some from the Old Norse feminine (and masculine) nominative singular pronoun **sjá**. The new plural pronouns were certainly derived from or developed under the influence of the Old Norse plural pronouns **þeir, þeira, þeim**, for the diphthong that occurs in the Middle English forms cannot be accounted for on the basis of **þā, þāra, þām** (the plural forms of the demonstrative) which are the nearest corresponding Old English forms, tho Old English **þām** would be a perfectly possible original for the later Middle English **þem**.

55. Demonstrative Pronouns and Definite Article. The word **sē, sēo, þæt** was used in Old English both as a demonstrative and as a definite article and was inflected for gender, case, and number. In late Middle English we find that the word when used as a definite article has lost all inflection and has been reduced to the invariable form **þe**, and that when used as a demonstrative it has lost all inflection for gender and case and has been reduced to the two forms **þat** (singular) and **þo** (plural). The details of the development that took place within the Middle English

period and the causes that cooperated in this process of simplification and differentiation of forms are too complex and too uncertain to deal with here. It seems best merely to give the early Middle English and Late Middle English forms as they appear in the manuscripts, without attempting a phonetic interpretation of the forms and without attempting to show how much of the late ME development can be accounted for as the result of sound-change and how much is to be regarded as the result of analogy. Among the early Middle English forms, however, the nominative *þe* and *þeo*, which had begun to replace *se* and *seo*, are unquestionably analogy formations and are therefore printed in italics.

OLD ENGLISH

MIDDLE ENGLISH

	Early ME	Late ME	
Masculine Singular:		Def. Art.	Dem.
Nom. <i>sē</i>	<i>se, þe</i>	<i>þe</i>	<i>þat</i>
Gen. <i>þæs</i>	<i>þes, þas</i>	<i>þe</i>	<i>þat</i>
Dat. <i>þām, þān</i>	<i>þam, þen, þan</i>	<i>þe</i>	<i>þat</i>
Acc. <i>þone, þāne</i>	<i>þon(e),⁶²þen(e), þan(e)</i>	<i>þe</i>	<i>þat</i>
Inst. <i>þȳ, þon, þē</i>	<i>þi, þon, þe</i>		
Feminine Singular:			
Nom. <i>sēo</i>	<i>seo, þeo</i>	<i>þe</i>	<i>þat</i>
Gen. <i>þære</i>	<i>þer(e), þar(e)</i>	<i>þe</i>	<i>þat</i>
Dat. <i>þære</i>	<i>þer(e), þar(e)</i>	<i>þe</i>	<i>þat</i>
Acc. <i>þā</i>	<i>þo, þa</i>	<i>þe</i>	<i>þat</i>
Neuter Singular:			
Nom. <i>þæt</i>	<i>þet, þat</i>	<i>þe</i>	<i>þat</i>
Gen. <i>þæs</i>	<i>þes, þas</i>	<i>þe</i>	<i>þat</i>
Dat. <i>þām, þān</i>	<i>þam, þen, þan</i>	<i>þe</i>	<i>þat</i>
Acc. <i>þæt</i>	<i>þet, þat</i>	<i>þe</i>	<i>þat</i>
Inst. <i>þȳ, þon, þē</i>	<i>þi, þon, þe</i>		<i>þe</i>
Plural (all genders):			
Nom. <i>þā</i>	<i>þo, þa</i>	<i>þe</i>	<i>þo</i>
Gen. <i>þāra, þēra</i>	<i>þar(e), þer(e)</i>	<i>þe</i>	<i>þo</i>
Dat. <i>þām, þān</i>	<i>þam, þen, þan</i>	<i>þe</i>	<i>þo</i>
Acc. <i>þā</i>	<i>þo, þa</i>	<i>þe</i>	<i>þo</i>

⁶² When preceded by a stressed syllable final *e* was retained in Middle English until the fourteenth century or later, but it was very generally lost even in Early Middle English when preceded by an unstressed syllable (see 29, I, 3 above). This condition occurred (1) in words of three or more syllables, none of which had secondary stress, and (2) in the weak forms of words which were frequently used without stress, such as the personal pronouns and article.

The Old English demonstrative **þēs**, **þēos**, **þis** underwent a similar development in Middle English, for it lost all inflection for gender and case and was reduced to the invariable form **þes** or **þis**. This form was commonly used both as singular and plural, tho in later ME the specifically plural forms **þese** and **þise**, which were formed from the analogy of the plural adjective, were also used. Not much attention has been given by scholars to the Middle English development of this demonstrative and no attempt will be made here to indicate how much of it can be accounted for as the result of sound-change and how much is to be attributed to analogy. The more frequent forms that appear in early Middle English and late Middle English are given below as they appear in the manuscripts, without phonetic interpretation.

OLD ENGLISH	MIDDLE ENGLISH	
	Early ME	Late ME
Masculine Singular:		
Nom. þēs	þes	þes, þis
Gen. þis(s)es	þis(s)es, þes(s)es	þes, þis
Dat. þis(s)um	þis(s)e(n), þes(s)e(n)	þes, þis
Acc. þisne	þisne	þes, þis
Feminine Singular:		
Nom. þēos	þeos, þes	þes, þis
Gen. þisse, þissere	þisse, þesse, þissere, þessere	þes, þis
Dat. þisse, þissere	þisse, þesse, þissere, þessere	þes, þis
Acc. þās	bas, þos, þise, þese	þes, þis
Neuter Singular:		
Nom. þis	þis	þes, þis
Gen. þis(s)es	þis(s)es, þes(s)es	þes, þis
Dat. þis(s)um	þis(s)e(n), þes(s)e(n)	þes, þis
Acc. þis	þis	þes, þis
Plural (all genders)		
Nom. þās	bas, þos	þes, þis, þese, þise
Gen. þissa, þissera	þisse, þissere	þes, þis, þese, þise
Dat. þis(s)um	þis(s)e(n), þes(s)e(n)	þes, þis, þese, þise
Acc. þās	bas, þos	þes, þis, þese, þise

VERBS

56. Weak Verbs. In Middle English, as in Old English and all other Germanic languages, there are two conjugations of verbs, the strong and the weak. Weak verbs form their preterit by means of a suffix containing **d** or **t** followed by endings indicative of person and number. From the point of view of their development in Middle English, we may say that there were two types of weak verbs in Old English. Verbs of the first type had preterits ending in **-ede** or **-ode** and past participles ending in **-ed** or **-od**; for example,

fremman (<i>make</i>)	fremede	fremed
erian (<i>plow</i>)	erede	ered
lufian (<i>love</i>)	lufode	lufod

In Middle English the distinction between **lufian**, with preterit in **-ode**, and **fremman** and **erian**, with preterits in **-ede**, was done away with by the process of sound change, so that the earliest Middle English forms of these verbs were

fremme(n)	fremede	fremed
erie(n)	erede	ered
lufie(n)	lufede	lufed

These verbs, which we shall call weak verbs of Type I, therefore had in Middle English preterits ending in **-ede** and past participles ending in **-ed**. In early Middle English the infinitive of these verbs ended in **-e(n)** or **-ie(n)**, but in late Middle English, by the process of analogy, the ending **-ie(n)** was displaced by the commoner ending **-e(n)**.

Old English verbs of the second type had preterits ending in **-de** or **-te** and past participles ending in **-ed**, **-d**, or **-t**; for example:

dēman (<i>judge</i>)	dēmde	dēmed
fēlan (<i>feel</i>)	fēlde	fēled
fēdan (<i>feed</i>)	fēdde	fēded, fēdd
wendan (<i>turn</i>)	wende	wended, wend
cēpan (<i>keep</i>)	cēpte	cēped
mētan (<i>meet</i>)	mētte	mēted, mētt
settan (<i>set</i>)	sette	seted, sett
sēcān (<i>seek</i>)	sōhte	sōht
þencān (<i>think</i>)	þōhte	þōht

In Middle English these verbs developed, according to the regular laws of sound change, as follows:

deme(n) [deɪmən]	demde [deɪmdə]	demed [deɪməd]
fele(n) [feɪlən]	felte [felte]	feled [feɪləd]
fede(n) [feɪdən]	fedde [fɛddə]	fed [fɛd]
wende(n) [wɛndən]	wente [wɛntə]	went [wɛnt]
kepe(n) [keɪpən]	kepte [keptə]	keped [keɪpəd]
mete(n) [meɪtən]	mette [mɛttə]	met [mɛt]
sette(n) [sɛttən]	sette [sɛttə]	set [sɛt]
seche(n) [seɪtʃən]	soughte [sɔxtə]	sought [sɔxt]
bēche(n) [θɛntʃən]	boughte [θɔxtə]	bought [θɔxt]

These verbs, which we shall call weak verbs of Type II, therefore had in Middle English preterits ending in **-de** or **-te** and past participles ending in **-ed**, **d**, or **t**. It will be observed (cf. 27, 1, a above) that the long vowels of **felen**, **fedden**, **kepen**, and **meten** are shortened in the preterit, where they were followed by a double consonant or a combination of consonants. For **felte** see 112, a below.

57. Strong Verbs. Strong verbs form their preterit, not by the addition of a suffix, but by means of a change in the vowel of the stem of the verb. This change is called "ablaut," and the strong verbs are frequently called "ablaut verbs." The preterit plural of these verbs usually has a different vowel from the preterit singular; the principal parts therefore are the infinitive, the preterit indicative first person singular, the preterit indicative plural, and the past participle.

In Old English there were seven classes of strong verbs; the principal parts of verbs representative of these seven classes are given in the first of the two tables opposite the following page. The Old English forms given are those that were common to the West-Saxon and the Mercian dialects. Where the West-Saxon and the Mercian forms were not the same both forms are given.

By the operation of the sound changes which have been explained in sections 26 and 27, these Old English forms developed in Middle English as shown in the second of the two tables opposite the following page, the West-Saxon forms corresponding to those of the Southern dialect and the Mercian forms to those of the East Midland dialect.

58. Analogical Forms. The forms that developed from the Old English forms by sound change are those that occur in early Middle English, but in later Middle English we meet with a good many analogical forms. The most important results of analogy were these:

1. Strong verbs often acquired weak preterits; e.g., **crepte** [kreptə], in place of **creep**, **sleep**.

2. The vowel of the preterit plural was often substituted for the vowel of the preterit singular; e.g., **beer**, with the vowel of the preterit plural, displaced **bar**.

3. The vowel of the preterit singular was often substituted for the vowel of the preterit plural; e.g., **bare(n)** [bə:ɾən], with the vowel of the preterit singular (lengthened when it came to stand in an open syllable),⁶³ displaced **bere(n)**.

4. The vowel of the past participle was often substituted for the vowel of the preterit plural; e.g., **crope(n)** [krə:pən], with the vowel of the past participle, displaced **crupe(n)**.

5. In the past participles of verbs of Class V the vowel **o** [ɔ] was substituted for the original vowel **e**, from the analogy of the past participle of verbs of Class IV; e.g., **spoke(n)** [spə:kən], with the vowel of **bore(n)** [bə:ɾən], displaced **speke(n)** [spɛ:kən].

59. **Endings of Weak Verbs.** The historical development of the Middle English forms of the weak verb is shown in the tables printed below. Weak verbs of Type I are exemplified by Old English **erian** (*plow*) and **lufian** (*love*); weak verbs of Type II are exemplified by Old English **dēman** (*judge*). In the first column are given the Old English forms, in the second the historical forms that developed in early Middle English by sound-change, and in the third the analogical forms that developed in later Middle English.

OLD ENGLISH		MIDDLE ENGLISH	
		Historical forms	Analogical forms
Pres. Ind. Sing.	1 erie	erie	ere <i>f. m. E.</i>
	2 erest	erest	
	3 ereþ	ereþ	
Plur.	eriaþ	erieþ	ereþ, ere(n) ⁶⁴
Pret. Ind. Sing.	1 erede	erede, ered ⁶⁵	
	2 eredest	eredest	
	3 erede	erede, ered ⁶⁵	
Plur.	eredon	erede(n)	

⁶³ See section 27, 1, b, above.

⁶⁴ The ending **-e(n)** in the present indicative plural is a characteristic of the Midland dialect; the ending **-eþ** is a characteristic of the Southern dialect.

⁶⁵ For the loss of final **e** see note 62 above.

OLD ENGLISH

MIDDLE ENGLISH

		Historical forms	Analogical forms
Pres. Subj. Sing.	erie	erie	<i>era</i>
	Plur. erien	erie(n)	<i>ere(n)</i>
Pret. Subj. Sing.	eredē	eredē, ered ⁶⁸	
	Plur. ereden	eredē(n)	
Pres. Imp. Sing. 2	ere	ere	
	Plur. 2 eriaþ	erieþ	<i>ereþ</i>
Infinitive	erian	erie(n)	<i>ere(n)</i>
Gerund	tō erienne	to eriene	<i>to erene</i>
	tō erian	to erie(n)	<i>to ere(n)</i>
Pres. Participle	erierende	erierende, eriinde ⁶⁸	<i>erende, erinde,⁶⁸</i> <i>eringe, ering⁶⁸</i>
Past Participle	ered	ered	
Pres. Ind. Sing. 1	lufie	lufie, luvi ⁶⁸	<i>luve</i>
	2 lufast	luvest	
	3 lufað	luveþ	
	Plur. lufiaþ	luvieþ	<i>luveþ, luve(n)⁶⁷</i>
Pret. Ind. Sing. 1	lufode	lufede, lufed ⁶⁸	
	2 lufodest	lufedest	
	3 lufode	lufede, lufed ⁶⁸	
	Plur. lufodon	lufede(n)	
Pres. Subj. Sing.	lufie	lufie, luvi ⁶⁸	<i>luve</i>
	Plur. lufien	lufie(n), luvi(n)	<i>luve(n)</i>
Pret. Subj. Sing.	lufode	lufede, lufed ⁶⁸	
	Plur. lufoden	lufede(n)	
Pres. Imp. Sing. 2	lufa	luve	
	Plur. 2 lufiaþ	luvieþ	<i>luveþ</i>
Infinitive	lufian	lufie(n), luvi(n)	<i>luve(n)</i>
Gerund	tō lufienne	to lufiene	<i>to lufene,</i>
	tō lufian	to lufie(n), to luvi(n)	<i>to luve(n)</i>

⁶⁶ The ending *-inde* is a characteristic of the Southern dialect, the ending *-ende* of the Midland dialect.

⁶⁷ The ending *-e(n)* in the present indicative plural is a characteristic of the Midland dialect; the ending *-eþ* is a characteristic of the Southern dialect.

⁶⁸ For the loss of final *e* see note 62 above.

OLD ENGLISH		MIDDLE ENGLISH	
		Historical forms	Analogical forms
Pres. Participle	lufiende	luviende, luvünde ⁶⁹	luvende, luvinde, ⁶ luvinge, luving ⁷¹
Past Participle	lufod	luved	
Pres. Ind. Sing.	1 dēme	deme	
	2 dēmest, dēmst	demest, demst	
	3 dēmeþ, dēmþ	demeþ, demþ	
Plur.	dēmaþ	demeþ	deme(n) ⁶⁷
Pret. Ind. Sing.	1 dēmde	demde	
	2 dēmdest	demdest	
	3 dēmde	demde	
Plur.	dēmdon	demde(n)	
Pres. Subj. Sing.	dēme	deme	
Plur.	dēmen	deme(n)	
Pret. Subj. Sing.	dēmde	demde	
Plur.	dēmden	demde(n)	
Pres. Imp. Sing.	2 dēm	dem	deme
Plur.	2 dēmaþ	demeþ	
Infinitive	dēman	deme(n)	
Gerund	tō dēmenne	to demene	
	tō dēman	to deme(n)	
Pres. Participle	dēmende	demende, deminde ⁷⁰	deminge, deming ⁷¹
Past Participle	dēmed	demed	

60. **Endings of Strong Verbs.** The historical development of the Middle English forms of the strong verb, exemplified by Old English *riðan* (*ride*) and *bindan* (*bind*), is shown in the tables printed below.

⁶⁹ The ending *-inde* is a characteristic of the Southern dialect, the ending *-ende* of the Midland dialect.

⁷⁰ The ending *-inde* is a characteristic of the Southern dialect, the ending *-ende* of the Midland dialect.

⁷¹ For the loss of final *e* see note 62 above.

OLD ENGLISH

MIDDLE ENGLISH

		Historical forms	Analogical forms
Pres. Ind. Sing.	1 <i>ride</i>	<i>ride</i>	
	2 <i>rideſt, riſtſt</i>	<i>rideſt, riſtſt</i> [riſtſt]	
	3 <i>rideþ, riſt</i>	<i>rideþ, riſt</i> [riſt]	
Plur.	<i>ridaþ</i>	<i>rideþ</i>	<i>ride(n)</i> ⁷²
Pret. Ind. Sing.	1 <i>rād</i>	<i>rood</i>	
	2 <i>ride</i> ⁷³	<i>ride</i>	<i>rood</i>
	3 <i>rād</i>	<i>rood</i>	
Plur.	<i>ridon</i>	<i>ride(n)</i>	
Pres. Subj. Sing.	<i>ride</i>	<i>ride</i>	
Plur.	<i>riden</i>	<i>ride(n)</i>	
Pret. Subj. Sing.	<i>ride</i>	<i>ride</i>	
Plur.	<i>riden</i>	<i>ride(n)</i>	
Pres. Imp. Sing.	2 <i>rið</i>	<i>rið</i>	
Plur.	2 <i>ridaþ</i>	<i>rideþ</i>	
Infinitive	<i>riðan</i>	<i>ride(n)</i>	
Gerund	<i>tō ridenne</i>	<i>to ridene</i>	
	<i>tō riðan</i>	<i>to ride(n)</i>	
Pres. Participle	<i>riðende</i>	<i>ride(n), ride(n)</i> ⁷⁴	<i>ridinge, riding</i> ⁷⁵
Past Participle	<i>riden</i>	<i>ride(n)</i>	
Pres. Ind. Sing.	1 <i>binde</i>	<i>binde</i>	
	2 <i>bindeſt, bintſt</i>	<i>bindeſt, bintſt</i>	
	3 <i>bindeþ, bint</i>	<i>bindeþ, bint</i>	
Plur.	<i>bindaþ</i>	<i>bindeþ</i>	<i>binde(n)</i> ⁷²
Pret. Ind. Sing.	1 <i>band</i>	<i>bond</i>	
	2 <i>bunde</i> ⁷³	<i>bunde</i>	<i>bond</i>
	3 <i>band</i>	<i>bond</i>	
Plur.	<i>bundon</i>	<i>bunde(n)</i>	
Pres. Subj. Sing.	<i>binde</i>	<i>binde</i>	
Plur.	<i>binden</i>	<i>binde(n)</i>	

⁷² The ending *-e(n)* in the present indicative plural is a characteristic of the Midland dialect; the ending *-eþ* is a characteristic of the Southern dialect.

⁷³ It should be observed that the preterit indicative 2 singular of the strong verbs has the vowel of the preterit plural.

⁷⁴ The ending *-inde* is a characteristic of the Southern dialect, the ending *-ende* of the Midland dialect.

⁷⁵ For the loss of final *e* see note 62 above.

OLD ENGLISH		MIDDLE ENGLISH	
		Historical forms	Analogical forms
Pret. Subj. Sing.	bunde	bunde	
Plur.	bunden	bunde(n)	
Pres. Imp. Sing.	2 bind	bind	
Plur.	2 bindaþ	bindeþ	
Infinitive	bindan	binde(n)	
Gerund	tō bindenne	to bindene	
	tō bindan	to binde(n)	
Pres. Participle	bindende	bindende	<i>bindinge, binding</i> ⁷⁶
		bindinde ⁷⁷	
Past Participle	bunden	bunde(n)	

61. Preteritive-Present Verbs. The preteritive-present (or strong-weak) verbs have **present** indicatives which are like the **preterit** indicatives of strong verbs in that they have no ending in the first and third persons singular and have the ending **-e(n)** (from Old English **-on**) in the plural.⁷⁸ The **preterits** of these verbs are **weak**. The indicative forms of Middle English **shal**, for example, are as follows:

Pres. Ind. Sing.	1 shal
	2 shalt
	3 shal
Plur.	shule(n)
Pret. Ind. Sing.	1 sholde
	2 sholdest
	3 sholde
Plur.	sholde(n)

The most important of the preteritive-present verbs are:

owen, *own, be under obligation*
cunnen, *know, be able*
muwen, *be able*
moten, *be permitted, be under obligation*
shulen, *be under obligation, be about to*
witen, *know*

⁷⁶ See note 75 above.

⁷⁷ See note 74 above.

⁷⁸ The present indicative forms of these verbs are also like the preterit indicative forms of strong verbs in showing differences of ablaut (see section 57) between singular and plural. Compare **wāt-witon** and **rād-ridon**; **cann-cunnon** and **band-bundon**; **mōt-moton** and **scōc-scōcon**.

62. The historical development of the preteritive-present verbs is shown in the following tables:

OLD ENGLISH		MIDDLE ENGLISH	
		Historical forms	Analogical forms
Pres. Ind. Sing.	1 āh, āg	ouh [ɔ:ux], ow [ɔ:u]	owe [ɔ:uə]
	2 āhst	auhst [auxst]	ouhst [quxst], ⁸⁰
			owest [ɔ:uəst]
	3 āh, āg	ouh [ɔ:ux], ow [ɔ:u]	oweþ [ɔ:uəθ]
Plur.	āgon	owe(n) [ɔ:uən]	oweþ [ɔ:uəθ] ⁷⁰
Pret. Ind. Sing.	1 āhte	auhte [auxtə]	ouhte [quxtə] ⁸⁰
Infinitive	āgan	owe(n) [ɔ:uən]	
Pres. Ind. Sing.	1 cann, conn	can	
	2 canst, const	canst	
	3 cann, conn	can	
Plur.	cunnon	cunne(n)	
Pret. Ind. Sing.	1 cūþe	cūþe [ku:ðə]	cude [ku:də]
Infinitive	cunnan	cunne(n)	
Pres. Ind. Sing.	1 mæg	mai,	
	2 meaht, ⁸¹	meight, maught,	maist
	miht	might	
	3 mæg	mai,	
Plur.	magon, mugon ⁸²	mawe(n), muwe(n)	
Pret. Ind. Sing.	1 meahte ⁸¹	meighte, maughte,	mughte,
	mihte	mighte	moughte ⁸³
Infinitive	magan, mugan ⁸²	mawe(n), muwe(n)	

⁷⁰ This plural form occurs only in the Southern dialect.

⁸⁰ The shortening of long vowels before two or more consonants (see section 27, 1, a) occurred previous to the change of [ɑ:] to [ɔ:], so that the historical form had the diphthong *au*.

⁸¹ The forms *meaht* and *meahte*, which at one period were common to all the Old English dialects, developed later in the Kentish and West-Saxon dialects into *meht* and *mehte*, which were the basis of Middle English *meight* and *meighte*, and in the Mercian dialect into *mæht* and *mæhte*, which were the basis of Middle English *maught* and *maughte*.

⁸² The forms *mugon* and *mugan* are not recorded in Old English, but are inferred from the Middle English forms.

⁸³ Old English *mugan* and *mugan* became, according to 27, 3, d above, Middle English [mu:ən], which was the basis of the analogical form [mu:xtə], later [muxtə].

OLD ENGLISH		MIDDLE ENGLISH	
		Historical forms	Analogical forms
Pres. Ind. Sing.	1 mōt	mot	
	2 mōst	most	
	3 mōt	mot	
Plur.	mōton	mote(n)	
Pret. Ind. Sing.	1 mōste	moste	
Infinitive	mōtan	mote(n)	
Pres. Ind. Sing.	1 sceal, scel, scæl ⁸⁴	shal, shel	
	2 scealt, scelt, scælt ⁸⁴	shalt, shelt	
	3 sceal, scel, scæl ⁸⁴	shal, shel	
Plur.	sculon	shule(n)	
Pret. Ind. Sing.	1 scolde	sholde	shulde
Infinitive	sculan	shule(n)	
Pres. Ind. Sing.	1 wāt	wot	
	2 wāst	wast	wost
	3 wāt	wot	
Plur.	witon	wite(n)	
Pret. Ind. Sing.	1 wiste	wiste, wuste	
Infinitive	witan	wite(n)	

63. Anomalous Verbs. The historical development of the Middle English verb *bee(n)*, *be*, was as follows:

OLD ENGLISH		MIDDLE ENGLISH	
		Historical forms	Analogical forms
Pres. Ind. Sing.	1 eom bēo	em be	
	eam ⁸⁵	am	
	2 eart bist	art bist	beest
	3 is biþ	is biþ	beep

⁸⁴ The forms *sceal* and *scealt* were early West-Saxon; *scel* and *scelt* occurred in the Kentish dialect and in late West-Saxon; *scæl* occurred in the Mercian dialect.

⁸⁵ *eam* is the Mercian form, *eom* the West-Saxon.

*our am
develops from this*

OLD ENGLISH

MIDDLE ENGLISH

Historical
formsAnalogical
forms

Plur.	sinðon earon ⁸⁶	bēoþ	sinde(n) are(n) ⁸⁷	beeþ	biþ, bee(n) ⁸⁸
Pret. Ind. Sing. 1	wæs		wes, was		
	2 WS. wære Merc. wēre		Sth. were [wæirə] Mdl. were [weirə]		
	3 wæs		wes, was		
Plur.	WS. wæron Merc. wēron		Sth. were(n) [wæirən] Mdl. were(n) [weirən]		
Pres. Subj. Sing.	sīe	bēo	si	be	
Plur.	sien	bēon	si(n)	bee(n)	
Pret. Subj. Sing.	WS. wære Merc. wēre		Sth. were [wæirə] Mdl. were [weirə]		
Plur.	WS. wæren Merc. wēren		Sth. were(n) [wæirən] Mdl. were(n) [weirən]		
Pres. Imp. Sing. 2		bēo		be	
Plur. 2		bēoþ		beeþ	
Infinitive		bēon		bee(n)	

The historical development of the Middle English verbs **do(n)**, *do*, and **wille(n)**, *will*, in the indicative was as follows:

OLD ENGLISH

MIDDLE ENGLISH

Historical
formsAnalogical
forms

Pres. Ind. Sing. 1	dō	do	
	2 dēst	dest	dost
	3 dēþ	deþ	doþ
Plur.	dōþ	doþ	do(n) ⁸⁹
Pret. Ind. Sing. 1	dyde	dide, dude [dydə]	
	2 dydest	didest, dudest	
	3 dyde	dide, dude	
Plur.	dydon	dide(n), dude(n)	
Past Participle	dōn	don	

⁸⁶ **earon** is the Mercian form; **sinðon** was used in all the Old English dialects.

⁸⁷ **are(n)** was not used in the Southern dialect, but only in the Midland and North.

⁸⁸ **bee(n)** is a Midland form; it was not used in the South.

⁸⁹ **do(n)** is the Midland form; it was not used in the South.

76 = 2
77 = 76
78 = 77

OLD ENGLISH		MIDDLE ENGLISH	
		Historical forms	Analogical forms
Pres. Ind. Sing.	1 wille	wille, wulle	<i>wile, wule</i>
	2 wilt	wilt, wult	
	3 wile	wile, wule	<i>wille, wulle</i>
Plur.	willaþ	willeþ, wulleþ	<i>wille(n), wulle(n)⁹⁰</i>
Pret. Ind. Sing.	1 wolde	wolde	<i>wulde</i>
	2 woldest	woldest	<i>wuldest</i>
	3 wolde	wolde	<i>wulde</i>
Plur.	woldon	wolde(n)	<i>wulde(n)</i>

⁹⁰ **wille(n)** and **wulle(n)** are Midland forms.

PART IV

MIDDLE ENGLISH DIALECTS

64. Distribution of the Middle English Dialects. There were four chief dialects of Middle English, the Southern, the Kentish, the Midland, and the Northern. The Southern dialect was spoken south and east of a line which followed the Thames from its mouth to the eastern boundary of Gloucestershire but which then turned north and followed the boundaries of Gloucestershire and of Worcestershire to the Severn, and from there followed the Severn to its mouth. The Kentish dialect was spoken in Kent. The Northern dialect was spoken north of a line which ran, roughly, from the mouth of the Humber in the east to the northern boundary of Lancashire in the west. This district included Yorkshire and its adjacent counties and the lowlands of Scotland. The Midland dialect was spoken in the district that lay between the Northern and the Southern regions. The territory of the Midland dialect is further divided into the North and the South Midland and the East and the West Midland.

65. Relation between Middle English and Old English Dialects. Altho some of the differences that characterize the Middle English dialects developed within the Middle English period itself and have no counterpart among the phenomena that differentiate the Old English dialects, the greater number of Middle English dialect differences, especially those of a phonological character, are either directly or indirectly the result of dialect differences that already existed in Old English. The four chief dialects of Old English correspond in a general way to the four chief dialects of Middle English. Southern Middle English was developed out of West-Saxon, Kentish Middle English out of Kentish Old English, Midland Middle English out of Mercian Old English, and Northern Middle English out of Northumbrian Old English. No clear or adequate account of the phonological characteristics that differentiate the Middle English dialects can therefore be given without first stating the more important phonological differences that existed in the Old English dialects. The following statement includes only such differences

as are reflected in the Middle English development and ignores those that left little or no trace in Middle English. Since the Early West-Saxon dialect is the dialect that is best known to students of Old English, the statement is put in the form of a comparison of the sounds of Early West-Saxon with those of the non-West-Saxon dialects and Late West-Saxon. The several developments are given in the chronological order of their occurrence, except that those numbered 9, 10, 11, and 12 occurred within about the same period.

1. West Germanic \bar{a} , which became $\bar{æ}$ in West-Saxon, developed in the Northumbrian and Kentish regions and in the greater part of the Mercian region into \bar{e} ; e.g., WS $d\bar{æ}d$, $b\bar{æ}ron$; Kentish, Mercian, Northumbrian $d\bar{e}d$, $b\bar{e}ron$. The $\bar{æ}$ region is believed to have included the counties of Norfolk, Cambridge, Hertford, Buckingham, Oxford, Gloucester, and Worcester and the counties to the south of these, as well as the West-Saxon region. In Kentish, however, West Germanic \bar{a} is represented by \bar{e} , not $\bar{æ}$. Whether the original Kentish development was \bar{e} or whether it was originally $\bar{æ}$ and developed later into \bar{e} (see 5a below) is uncertain.

2. Prehistoric Old English $\bar{æ}$ was "broken" in West-Saxon and Kentish into ea when it was followed by l plus a consonant or by double l , but developed in Mercian and Northumbrian into a ; e.g., Prehistoric OE $*h\bar{æ}ldan$, $*f\bar{æ}llan$; WS and Kentish $healdan$, $feallan$; Mercian and Northumbrian $haldan$, $fallan$.

3. In early West-Saxon the vowels e , $\bar{æ}$, and $\bar{æ}$ (corresponding to non-West-Saxon \bar{e}) were diphthongised to ie , ea , and $\bar{e}a$ when they were preceded by \dot{g} , \dot{c} , or sc ; e.g., EWS $\dot{g}ieldan$, Kentish, Mercian, Northumbrian $\dot{g}eldan$; EWS $scield$, Kentish, Mercian, Northumbrian $sceld$; EWS $\dot{c}easter$, Kentish, Mercian, Northumbrian $\dot{c}æster$; EWS $\dot{g}\bar{e}ar$, Kentish, Mercian, Northumbrian $\dot{g}\bar{e}r$.

4. The vowel $\bar{æ}$ (except in lightly stressed words) became e in Kentish and the southwestern part of the Mercian region, but remained $\bar{æ}$ in West-Saxon, the rest of the Mercian region, and Northumbrian; e.g. WS, Mercian, Northumbrian $f\bar{æ}der$, $w\bar{æ}ter$; Kentish, Southwest Mercian $feder$, $weter$.

5. The following dialect differences resulted from the operation of the i -umlaut:

- a. Prehistoric OE \bar{a} became $\bar{æ}$ in all the dialects but later developed into \bar{e} in Kentish; e.g., Prehistoric OE $*d\bar{a}li$; WS, Mercian, Northumbrian $d\bar{æ}l$; Kentish $d\bar{e}l$.

- b. Prehistoric OE **ea** became early West-Saxon **ie** but Kentish, Mercian, and Northumbrian **e**; e.g. Prehistoric OE ***wearmjan**; EWS **wierman**; Kentish, Mercian, Northumbrian **werman**.
- c. Prehistoric OE **ēa** became early West-Saxon **ie** but Kentish, Mercian, and Northumbrian **ē**; e.g. Prehistoric OE ***hēarjan**; EWS **hieran**; Kentish, Mercian, Northumbrian **hēran**.
- d. Prehistoric OE **io** became early West-Saxon **ie** but remained Kentish, Mercian, and Northumbrian **io** (later becoming **eo** according to 8 below); e.g., Prehistoric OE ***ġiornjan**; EWS **ġiernan**; Kentish, Mercian, Northumbrian **ġiornan**.⁹¹
- e. Prehistoric OE **io** became early West-Saxon **ie** but remained Kentish, Mercian, and Northumbrian **io** (later becoming Mercian and Northumbrian **ēo** according to 8 below); e.g., EWS **diere**; Kentish, Mercian, Northumbrian **diore**.
- f. Prehistoric OE **u** and **ū** became **y** and **ȳ** in all the dialects but developed afterwards in Kent and adjacent counties into **e** and **ē**; e.g., Prehistoric OE ***guldin**; WS, Mercian, Northumbrian **gylden**; Kentish **gelden**; Prehistoric OE ***hūðjan**; WS, Mercian, Northumbrian **hȳðan**; Kentish **hēðan**. The region in which **y** and **ȳ** developed into **e** and **ē** appears to have included at least the counties of Sussex, Surrey, Middlesex, Essex, and Suffolk as well as Kent.

6. Mercian and Northumbrian **ea**, **ēa**, **eo**, **ēo**, **io**, and **īo** were "smoothed" to the simple vowels **æ**, **ǣ**, **e**, **ē**, **i**, and **ī** when they were followed by **c**, **g**, **h**, **rc**, **rg**, **rh**, **lc**, **lg**, or **lh**. The **æ** which was the immediate result of the smoothing of **ea** subsequently became **e** except before **h**, and the **ǣ** which was the immediate result of the smoothing of **ēa** subsequently became **ē** under all conditions. E. g., **feahrt** became **fæht**; **mearc** became **mærc**, later **merc**; **ēac** became **ēc**; **weorc** became **werc**; **flēogan** became **flēgan**; **tiohhian** became **tihhian**; **betwioh** became **betwih**.

7. Short vowels and short diphthongs were lengthened (probably not later than the year 900) when they were followed by **ld**, **rd**, **mb**, **nd**,

⁹¹ This **io** was the result of the breaking of Prehistoric OE **i**. But the breaking of **i** did not always occur in Mercian and Northumbrian when the second syllable of the word contained **i** or **j**. When no breaking occurred, the **i** was not modified by the **i**-umlaut.

ng, rl, rn, [rð], or [rz]; e.g., earlier OE **feld**, **findan**, **grund**, later OE **fēld**, **findan**, **gründ**; EWS and earlier Kentish **eald**, LWS and later Kentish **ēald**; Kentish, Mercian, and Northumbrian **giornan**, later **giornan**; earlier Mercian and Northumbrian **ald**, later Mercian and Northumbrian **āld**. This lengthening did not occur when the group was followed by a third consonant; e.g., OE **cild**, **cildru**, later OE **ċild**, **ċildru**.

8. In West-Saxon, Mercian, and Northumbrian **io** became **ēo**, and in West-Saxon, Kentish, and Mercian **io** became **eo**; but in the Kentish dialect **ēo** became **io**; e.g., WS **lioht** (adjective) became **lēoht** and **tiōhhian** became **teōhhian**; Mercian and Northumbrian **diore** became **dēore**; Mercian and Northumbrian **giornan** became **gēornan**; Kentish and Mercian **iorre** became **eorre**; Kentish **bēodan** became **biodan**.

9. The following developments occurred before the groups **hs**, **ht**, and **hþ** unless a back vowel followed the group:

- a. Early West-Saxon and Kentish **eo** became late West-Saxon and Kentish **i**, and early West-Saxon **ēo** became late West-Saxon **i**; e.g., EWS and Kentish **cneohht** became LWS and Kentish **cniht** (but EWS and Kentish **feohtan** remained unchanged because of the back vowel that followed the consonant group); EWS **lēoht** became LWS **liht**.
- b. Kentish **io** became **i**; e.g. earlier Kentish **lioht**, later Kentish **liht**.
- c. Kentish, Mercian, and Northumbrian **e** became **i**, and Mercian and Northumbrian **ē** became **i**; e.g., Kentish ***hlehhþ** (from Prehistoric ***hleahþ** by i-umlaut according to 5, b above) became **hlihþ**; Mercian and Northumbrian **cneht** (from **cneohht** by smoothing according to 6 above) became **cniht**; Mercian and Northumbrian **lēht** (noun, from **lēoht** by smoothing) became **liht**.

10. Under certain conditions early West-Saxon and Kentish **ea** and **ēa** became **e** and **ē**:

- a. Early West-Saxon and Kentish **ea** and **ēa** became **e** and **ē** when they were followed by **c**, **g**, or **h**; e.g., EWS and Kentish **ēac**, **ēage**, **meahte**, **hēah** became LWS and Kentish **ēc**, **ēge**, **mehte**, **hēh**.

- b. Early West-Saxon **ea** and **ēa** became **e** and **ē** when they were preceded by **ċ**, **ġ**, or **sc**; e.g., EWS **ċeaster**, **ċēas**, **ġeaf**, **ġēar**, **sceal**, **scēap** became LWS **ċester**, **ċēs**, **ġef**, **ġēr**, **scel**, **scēp**.

11. Late West-Saxon development of early West-Saxon **ie** and **īe**.

The early West-Saxon diphthongs **ie** and **īe** became simple vowels in late West-Saxon. Even in the early West-Saxon texts they are rather frequently written as **i** and sometimes (especially after **w**) as **y**. In late West-Saxon texts they are always written as **y** or **i**. From the Middle English development in Southern texts we must infer that the late West-Saxon development was either [y] and [yɪ] or [i] and [iɪ]. It is possible that the sounds developed differently in different parts of the West-Saxon territory, but if so we are unable to determine the geographical limits of the divergent developments. Before **ċ**, **ġ**, or **h** and groups of consonants containing these sounds (such as **ng**, **lg**, etc.) early West-Saxon **ie** and **īe** seem, however, to have always developed into late West-Saxon **i** and **ī** unless a labial consonant preceded.

12. Late West-Saxon development of early West-Saxon **y** and **ȳ**.

In parts of the West-Saxon territory there seems to have been a tendency for early West-Saxon **y** and **ȳ** to develop, by unrounding, into **i** and **ī**, especially before **ċ**, **ġ**, or **h** and groups of consonants containing these sounds. Certain phonetic environments, however, were favorable to the preservation of the rounded vowel, and in such environments we not only find that **y** and **ȳ** tended to remain but also that early West-Saxon **i** tended to be rounded to **y**. The conditions particularly favorable to the retention or development of a rounded vowel were a preceding labial consonant and a following **l** or **r**; e.g., EWS **hyġe**, **dryhten**, **hrycg**, **drȳġe**, **wyrċan**, **byrg**, **libban**, **ċirice**; LWS **hiġe** or **hyġe**, **drihten** or **dryhten**, **hricg** or **hrycg**, **driġe** or **drȳġe**, **wyrċan**, **byrg**, **lybban** or **libban**, **ċyrice** or **ċirice**. In general, however, early West-Saxon **y**, **ȳ**, and **i** remained unchanged in late West-Saxon.

As a qualification, however, to this statement of the dialect differences in Old English it should be said that altho we have good evidence of the existence of these differences we have no equally good evidence as to their precise geographical distribution. This is particularly true of the developments that were peculiar to early West-Saxon, that is 2, 3, and 5 b, c, d, e above. The forms showing these developments are on the whole the prevailing forms in the group of texts called "pure" West-Saxon, but forms showing the developments that occurred in the non-

West-Saxon dialects appear occasionally even in these texts and with much greater frequency in texts which, tho not "pure" West-Saxon, are certainly not Kentish, Mercian, or Northumbrian. And in the Southern Middle English texts also we find alongside of the forms that would have developed from the specifically West-Saxon forms others that seem to have developed from the non-West-Saxon forms. It is quite possible, or even probable, that these West-Saxon developments were current only within certain parts of the region south of the Thames and east of the Severn.

66. The Southern Dialect. The most important characteristics of the Southern dialect are the following:

I. Phonology.

1. Vowel Sounds.

The development of the Old English vowels and diphthongs in the East Midland dialect of Middle English has been given above in 26, 27. The normal development of the Old English vowel sounds in the Southern dialect was the same as in the East Midland dialect except that Old English \bar{y} and y , which had the sound of $[y]$ and $[y]$, preserved their original quality in the Southern dialect, tho the sounds were spelled in Middle English with **u** or **ui** instead of **y**; e.g., WS **fȳr**, Southern ME **vur**, **vuir**; WS **fyllan**, Southern ME **vullen**. But Kentish $[e]$ and $[e]$ occurred (in accordance with 5, f in section 65 above) in Surrey and Sussex, and thruout the whole southern region $[i]$ and $[i]$ occur frequently as the development of early West-Saxon **y** and \bar{y} before **c**, **g**, and **h** (in accordance with 12 in section 65 above.)

The special developments that occurred in the Southern dialect were also identical with those that occurred in the Midland dialect except that in the following cases the statements given in section 27 must be supplemented in order to explain the Middle English development of certain sound-combinations that existed in late West-Saxon but not in Mercian Old English:

(a) The diphthong $[ei]$ (see 27, 2 above) had a source in the Southern dialect which did not exist in the Midland dialect, namely West-Saxon $\bar{æ}$ followed by the $[g]$ sound that developed in Middle English into $[j]$; e.g., WS **lægon**, Southern ME

leie(n) [lɛiən]. The corresponding development in the Midland dialect was **lie(n)** [li:ən] from Mercian OE **lēgon** (with **ē** for WS **æ** according to 1 in section 65 above.)

(b) The vowel [i:] (see 27, 3 above) had two sources in the Southern dialect that did not exist in the Midland dialect: (1) West-Saxon **ēo** followed by the [ɣ] sound that developed in Middle English into [j], e.g., WS **lēogan**, Southern ME **lie(n)** [li:ən]; (2) West-Saxon **ēo** followed by **h**, e.g., WS **þēoh**, Southern ME **thigh** [θi:ç]. The corresponding developments in the Midland dialect were **lie(n)** from Mercian OE **lēgan** and **thigh** [θi:ç] from Mercian OE **þēh** (both having Mercian **ē** from earlier **ēo** according to 6 in section 65 above).

But altho the Southern Middle English development of the late West-Saxon sounds was identical (except as stated above) with the East Midland development of the late Mercian sounds, the results of the development were very frequently different in the two dialects because of differences between late West-Saxon and late Mercian. To specify all the differences between Southern and Midland Middle English that resulted from this difference of dialect basis would be tedious and confusing; the following, numbered to correspond with the statements given in section 65 above, are the most important:

1. WS **æ** from West Germanic **ā** developed into Southern ME [ɛɪ], but Mercian **ē** from West Germanic **ā** developed into Midland ME [eɪ]; e.g., WS **dǣd**, Southern ME **deed** [dɛɪd]; WS **bāron**, Southern ME **bere(n)** [beɪrən]; Mercian OE **dēd** [deɪd], Midland ME **deed** [deɪd]; Mercian OE **bēron**, Midland ME **bere(n)** [beɪrən].
2. WS **ea** that developed out of **æ** followed by **ld** developed when lengthened (according to 7) into **ēa** which became Southern ME [ɛɪ], but the Mercian **a** that developed out of **æ** followed by **ld** was lengthened to **ā** and developed into Midland ME [ɔɪ]; e.g., EWS **eald**, LWS **ēald**, Southern ME **eld** [ɛɪld]; EWS **healdan**, LWS **hēaldan**, Southern ME **helde(n)** [heɪldən]; Mercian OE **ald**, later **āld**, Midland ME **old** [ɔɪld]; Mercian OE **haldan**, later **hāldan**, Midland ME **holde(n)** [hɔɪldən].

3. EWS **ea** and **ie** which developed out of **æ** and **e** preceded by **ċ**, **ġ**, or **sc** became LWS **e** (**ē**)⁹² according to 10 and **y** (**ȳ**) or **i** (**ī**) according to 11, 65, and these LWS sounds were the basis of the ME development; e.g., EWS **ġeaf**, LWS **ġef**, Southern ME **yef**; EWS **ġieldan**, LWS **ġȳldan** or **ġildan**, Southern ME **yulde(n)** [**jy:ldən**] or **yilde(n)** [**ji:ldən**] EWS **sciold**, LWS **scȳld** or **scild**; Southern ME **shuld** [**ʃy:ld**] or **shild** [**ʃild**]. The corresponding development in the Mercian dialect was Mercian OE **ġæf**, Midland ME **yaf**; Mercian OE **ġeldan**, later **ġeldan**, Midland ME **yelde(n)** [**je:ldən**]; Mercian OE **sceld**, later **scēld**, Midland ME **sheld** [**ʃe:ld**].
5. (b) EWS **ie** that resulted from the **i**-umlaut of EWS **ea** became LWS **y** (**ȳ**) or **i** (**ī**), which were the basis of the ME development, but the Mercian **e** that resulted in this situation became Midland ME **e**; e.g., EWS **ieldra** (from Prehistoric OE ***ældira**, later ***ealdira**), LWS **yldra** or **ildra**, Southern ME **uldre** [**yldrə**] or **ildre** [**ildrə**]; Mercian **eldra** (from Prehistoric OE ***ældira**; later ***aldira**)⁹³, Midland ME **eldre** [**eldrə**].
- (c) EWS **ie** that resulted from the **i**-umlaut of **ēa** became LWS **ȳ** or **ī**, which developed into Southern ME [**y:**] or [**i:**], but the Mercian **ē** that resulted from this umlaut became Midland ME [**e:**]; e.g., EWS **hieran**, LWS **hȳran** or **hiran**, Southern ME **hure(n)** [**hy:rən**] or **hire(n)** [**hi:rən**]; Mercian OE **hēran**, Midland ME **here(n)** [**he:rən**].
- (d) EWS **ie** that resulted from the **i**-umlaut of **io** became LWS **y** (**ȳ**) or **i** (**ī**), which were the basis of the ME development, but the Mercian **io** that resulted from this umlaut became (according to 8) late Mercian **eo** (**ēo**), which developed into Midland ME **e**; e.g., EWS **hierde**, LWS **hȳrde** or **hirde**, Southern ME **hurde** [**hy:rdə**] or **hirde** [**hi:rdə**]; Mercian **hiorde**, later **hiorde**, then **hēorde**, Midland ME **herde** [**he:rdə**].⁹⁴

⁹² The sounds in parenthesis used here and under 5, b and 5, d are those that developed according to 7 before consonant groups that caused lengthening.

⁹³ In this example the Mercian **e** is not the umlaut of **ea** but of **a**, because, according to 2, Prehistoric OE **æ** became **a** before **l** plus a consonant in Mercian and Northumbrian. The result of this umlaut was originally **æ**, which seems from the evidence of the ME forms to have developed usually into **e**.

⁹⁴ But we also find occasionally in Midland ME forms with **i** instead of **e**; e.g. **hirde** [**hi:rdə**]; these developed according to note 91 above from Mercian forms that had **i** instead of **io**.

(e) EWS **ie** that resulted from the **i**-umlaut of **io** became LWS **ȳ** or **i**, which developed into Southern ME [yɪ] or [iɪ], but the Mercian **io** that resulted from this umlaut became later Mercian **ēo**, which developed into Midland ME [eɪ], e.g., EWS **diere**, LWS **dȳre**, Southern ME **dure** [dy:rə]; Mercian **diore**, later **dēore**, Midland ME **dere** [de:rə].

6. The results of the Mercian (and Northumbrian) smoothing were for the most part obliterated by later developments that occurred either in OE or in ME; the most conspicuous trace of this OE dialect characteristic that remains in ME is that EWS **ea** followed by **h** became LWS **e**, according to 10, a, and then developed according to 27, 2 above into Southern ME [ei], whereas the Mercian **æ** which came from earlier **ea** followed by **h** developed according to 27, 2 into Midland ME [au]; e.g., EWS **feahht**, LWS **feht**, Southern ME **feight** [feɪt]; Mercian **feahht**, later **fæht**, Midland ME **faught** [fauxt].

2. Consonant Sounds.

The Old English initial voiceless spirants [f], [s], and [θ] changed to the corresponding voiced spirants [v], [z], and [ð]; e.g., OE **for**, Southern ME **vor**; OE **song**, Southern ME **zong**; OE **þæt** [θæt], Southern ME **bat** [ðat].⁹⁵

3. Final e.

Final **e** was retained in pronunciation thruout the fourteenth century

II. Morphology.

1. Nouns.

(a) The historical forms of the noun declensions (see 34 ff. above) were displaced only slowly by analogical forms. Genitive and dative singulars in **e**, nominative, genitive, and accusative plurals in **e**, dative plurals in **e(n)**, etc., are common in texts of the thirteenth century and occur occasionally in texts of the fourteenth century.

⁹⁵ The initial [v] is indicated pretty consistently in the spelling of Southern Middle English texts; the initial [z] is indicated by the spelling of one (Kentish) text only, for the letter **z** was little used by the Middle English scribes. The initial [ð] is not indicated by spelling at all, for the scribes had no way of distinguishing the sounds of [ð] and [θ] in writing.

(b) The distinctions of grammatical gender were maintained with a considerable degree of consistency thruout the first half of the thirteenth century, and relics of grammatical gender are found even in texts of the first half of the fourteenth century.

2. Adjectives.

The historical forms of the genitive, dative, and accusative in the strong adjective declension (see 48 ff. above) were displaced only slowly by analogical forms; the historical forms occur frequently in texts of the first half of the thirteenth century.

3. Pronouns.

(a) The historical forms of the genitive, dative, and accusative of the definite article and demonstrative **þe** (*se*), **þeo** (*seo*), **þat**⁹⁶ (see 55 above) were displaced only slowly by analogical forms; historical forms are common in the first half of the thirteenth century and occasional until at least the end of that century.

(b) The historical forms of the accusative of the third personal pronoun (see 54 above) were not wholly displaced by analogical forms until the second half of the thirteenth century.

(c) The pronouns **ha**, **a** (*he, she, they, them*), **hare** (*her, their*), and **ham** (*them*) were in frequent use.

4. Verbs.

(a) The ending of the present indicative plural of strong verbs was **-eþ**; the ending of the present indicative plural of weak verbs was **-eþ** or **-ieþ**.⁹⁷

(b) The ending of the present participle of strong verbs was **-inde**, later **-inge**; the ending of the present participle of weak verbs was **-inde**, later **-inge**, or **-iinde**, later **-inge**.

(c) Weak verbs like **erien** and **luvien** (see 59 above) preserved their historical endings, **-ie**, **-ie(n)**, etc., thruout the thirteenth century with little substitution of analogical forms.

⁹⁶ In the Southern dialect **þat** is used as the definite article as well as the demonstrative; in the Midland and Northern dialects **þat** is used only as the demonstrative.

⁹⁷ Likewise, **beeþ** is the Southern form of the present indicative plural of **bee(n)**, *be*.

67. The Kentish Dialect. The most important characteristics of the Kentish dialect are the following:

I. Phonology.

1. Vowel Sounds.

The normal development of the Old English vowel sounds in the Kentish dialect was identical with that which took place in the East Midland dialect as given above in 26 except in the following respects:

(a) Kentish Old English *ĕa* did not become [ɛɪ] but developed into a sound written *ea*, *ia*, *ya*, *yea*, and (sometimes) *a* or *e*. This sound is believed to have been a diphthong approximating [ea] whose two elements originally had equal stress. Later this diphthong is believed to have developed into either a rising or a falling diphthong. The former development led to [ja] and sometimes eventually to [aɪ]; the latter to [eə] and sometimes eventually to [eɪ]. E.g. Kentish OE *grĕat*, Kentish ME *great*, *griat*, *grat*; Kentish OE *lēaf*, Kentish ME *leaf*, *lyaf*, *lyeaf*; Kentish OE *strĕam*, Kentish ME *stream*, *strem*.

(b) Kentish Old English *io* developed into a sound written *ie*, *ye*, *i*, *y*, and *e*. This sound is believed to have been a diphthong approximating [ie] whose two elements originally had equal stress. Later this diphthong is believed to have developed into either a rising or a falling diphthong. The former development led to [je] and sometimes eventually to [eɪ]; the latter to [iə] and sometimes (especially when final) to [iɪ]. E. g. Kentish OE *diore*, Kentish ME *diere*, *dyere*; Kentish OE *bion*, Kentish ME *bie*, *bi*, *by*; Kentish OE *cliofan*, Kentish ME *cleve(n)*.

The special developments that occurred in the Kentish dialect were also identical with those that occurred in the East Midland dialect as given above in 27 except as follows:

(c) Kentish Old English *ĕa* followed by *w* developed into [ɛu] or [eu] if the diphthong which developed from the *ĕa* was a falling diphthong, but into [eau] or [jau] if it was a rising diphthong; e.g., Kentish OE *fĕawe*, Kentish ME *veve* or *veawe*. The corresponding Midland development was [ɛu].

(d) Kentish Old English *io* followed by the [j] sound that developed in Middle English out of Old English [ɣ] underwent

the normal Kentish development of **io**; e.g., OE **liogan**, Kentish ME **lieȝe(n)**.

(e) Kentish Middle English [e:] preceded by **h** or **cl** developed into a diphthong written **ie** or **ye**, which is believed to have been originally a rising diphthong but to have developed later into a falling diphthong; e.g., Kentish OE **hēr**, Kentish ME **hier** or **hyer**; Kentish OE **clēne**, Mercian, West-Saxon **clāne**, Kentish ME **cliene**.

(f) Kentish Middle English [o:] and [ɔ:] preceded by **g** or **b** developed into a diphthong which is believed to have been originally a rising diphthong but to have developed later into a falling diphthong; e.g. Kentish OE **gōd**, Kentish ME **guod**; Kentish OE **bān**, Kentish ME **buon**.

But altho the Kentish development of the late Kentish Old English vowel sounds was identical (except as stated above) with the East Midland development of the late Mercian sounds, the results of the development were very frequently different in the two dialects because of differences between late Kentish and late Mercian. The most important of these differences, numbered to correspond with the statement of the Old English dialect differences given above in section 65, are the following:

2. Kentish **ea** which developed out of **æ** followed by **ld** developed when lengthened according to 7 into late Kentish **ēa**, which underwent the usual Kentish development in Middle English; e.g., Kentish OE **eald**, later **ēald**, Kentish ME **eald**, **iald**, **yeald**, **ald**; Mercian OE **ald**, later **āld**, Midland ME **old** [ɔ:ld].
4. Kentish Old English **e** from earlier **æ** developed into Middle English [e], but East Mercian Old English **æ** developed into East Midland **a**; e.g. Kentish OE **gled**, **weter**, Kentish ME **gled**, **weter**; East Mercian OE **glæd**, **wæter**, East Midland ME **glad**, **water**. So also Kentish Old English **e** from earlier **æ** followed by **ġ** developed into Middle English **ei** [ei], but the corresponding East Mercian **æ** followed by **ġ** developed into East Midland **ai** [ai]; e.g. Kentish OE **deġ**, Kentish ME **dei**; East Mercian OE **dæg**, East Midland ME **dai**.
5. (a) Kentish Old English [e:] which resulted from the **i**-umlaut of **ā** became Middle English [e:], but the Mercian **ā** which resulted from this umlaut became Midland [ɛ:]; e.g. Kentish OE **dāl**, Kentish ME **deel** [de:ɪl]; Mercian OE **dāel**, Midland ME **deel** [de:ɪl].

- (b) Kentish **e** and **ē** which resulted from the **i**-umlaut of **u** and **ū** became Middle English [e] and [e:], but the Mercian Old English **y** and **ȳ** that resulted from this umlaut became [i] and [i:] in most of the East Midland territory; e.g. Kentish OE **gelt**, **fēr**, Kentish ME **gelt**, **ver**; Mercian OE **gylt**, **fȳr**, East Midland ME **gilt**, **fir**.
6. The differences that resulted from the Mercian (and Northumbrian) smoothing were for the most part obliterated by later developments in Old English or in Middle English; the most conspicuous trace in Middle English of this difference between Kentish and Mercian Old English is that late Kentish **eh** from earlier **eah** (according to 10, a) developed into Middle English **ei**, whereas Mercian **æh** from earlier **eah** developed into Middle English **au**; e.g. late Kentish **feht** (from earlier **feaht**), Kentish ME **feight**; Mercian OE **fæht** (from earlier **feaht**), Midland ME **faught**.
 7. Early Kentish Old English **ēo** became late Kentish **io** which underwent the usual Kentish development in Middle English, but Mercian Old English **ēo** developed into Midland Middle English [e:]; e.g. late Kentish OE **dīop** (from earlier **dēop**) Kentish ME **diep**, **dyep**; Mercian OE **dēop**, Midland ME **deep**, [de:ɪp].
 2. Consonant Sounds. As in the Southern dialect, under I, 2 in section 66 above.
 3. Final **e**. As in the Southern dialect, under I, 3 in section 66 above.

II. Morphology. The morphology of the Kentish dialect was like that of the Southern dialect except that the historical forms of the noun declensions, of the strong adjective declension, of the definite article and demonstrative, of the accusative of the third personal pronoun, and of weak verbs like **erie(n)** and **luvie(n)** were displaced by analogical forms even more slowly in the Kentish than in the Southern dialect. The morphology of the *Ayenbite of Inwit*, written in Canterbury in 1340, is more conservative than Southern texts written at least seventy-five years earlier.

68. **The Midland Dialect.** The most important characteristics of the Midland dialect are the following:

I. Phonology.

1. Vowel Sounds. The normal development and the special developments of the Mercian Old English vowel sounds in the East Midland dialect of Middle English has been given above in 26, 27. The phonological differences between East and West Midland will be stated below in 69.
2. Final e. Final e was to a great extent retained in pronunciation thruout the fourteenth century, but apocope of final e began before the end of the thirteenth century.

II. Morphology.

1. Nouns and Adjectives.

- (a) The analogical changes that took place in the inflection of nouns (see 34 ff. above) and adjectives (see 48 ff.) were carried out before the end of the twelfth century.
- (b) The distinctions of grammatical gender were lost before the end of the twelfth century.

2. Pronouns.

- (a) The historical forms of the genitive, dative, and accusative of the definite article and demonstrative **þe** (se), **þeo** (seo), **þat** (see 55 above) were displaced by analogical forms before the end of the twelfth century.
- (b) The historical forms of the accusative of the third personal pronoun (see 54 above) were displaced by dative forms before the end of the twelfth century.

3. Verbs.

- (a) The ending of the present indicative plural of strong and weak verbs was **-e(n)**.
- (b) The ending of the present participle of strong and weak verbs was **-ende**, later **-inge** or **-ing**. (The ending **-and** also occurs, especially in the North Midland.)
- (c) The historical endings (**ie**, **ie(n)**, etc.) of weak verbs like **erien** and **luvien** (see 59 above) were for the most part displaced by analogical forms before the end of the twelfth century.

Two middle
-e(n)

Two past

-ende

-inge

-ing

-and 21. 24.

69. The East and West Midland Dialects. The development of the Old English vowel sounds in the West Midland differed in the following respects from the development that occurred in the East Midland dialect:

1. The development of West Germanic **ā** in Midland Middle English corresponds to the development that took place in Mercian Old English, as stated above in 65, 1, Mercian **ē** becoming Middle English [eɪ] in the western and northeastern portions of the Midland territory and southeast Mercian **æ** becoming Middle English [ɛɪ] in the southeast; e.g. Mercian OE **dēd**, **bēron**, West and Northeast Midland ME **deed** [deɪd], **bere(n)** [beɪrən]; southeast Mercian **dǣd**, **bǣron**, Southeast Midland ME **deed** [deɪd], **bere(n)** [beɪrən].
2. Prehistoric Old English **a** followed by a nasal underwent the following development in Midland Middle English:

O, E a

 - (a) In closed syllables (when not followed by a consonant group that caused lengthening in Old English according to 65, 7 above) it developed into East Midland [ʌ] but West Midland [ɔ]; e.g. Old English **þanc**, **þonc**, East Midland ME **thank**, West Midland ME **thonk**.

E m a
W m o
 - (b) In closed syllables when followed by a consonant group that caused lengthening in Old English according to 65, 7 above it developed (unless it was shortened in early Middle English) into East Midland [ɔɪ] but West Midland [oɪ]; e.g. OE **land**, **loond**, East Midland ME **loond** [loɪnd], West Midland ME **loond** [loɪnd].

E m o:
W m o:
 - (c) In open syllables it developed into East Midland [aɪ] but West Midland [ɔɪ]; e.g. OE **nama**, **noma**, East Midland ME **name** [naɪmə], West Midland **nome** [nɔɪmə].

E nam
W nam
3. Southwest Mercian Old English **e** from earlier **æ** according to 65, 4 above developed into Southwest Midland Middle English [ɛ], but Northwest and East Midland Old English **æ** developed into Northwest and East Midland Middle English [ʌ]; e.g. southwest Mercian OE **gled**, **weter**, Southwest Midland ME **gled**, **weter**; northwest and east Mercian OE **glæd**, **wæter**, Northwest and East Midland ME **glad**, **water**. So also southwest Mercian **e** from earlier **æ** followed by **ġ** developed into

Southwest Midland Middle English [ɛi], but the corresponding northwest and east Mercian æ followed by ġ developed into Northwest and East Midland Middle English [ai]; e.g. southwest Mercian OE *deġ*, Southwest Midland ME *dei*; northwest and east Mercian OE *dæġ*, Northwest and East Midland ME *dai*.

4. Old English *ȳ* and *y* developed in the East Midland dialect into Middle English [i:] and [i] but preserved their original quality of [y:] and [y] in the West Midland dialect, tho the sounds were spelled in Middle English with *u* or *ui* instead of *y*; e.g. OE *fȳr*, *fyllan*, East Midland ME *fīr* [fīr], *fil(e)n* [fīllən], West Midland ME *fur*, *fuir* [fy:r], *fulle(n)* [fyllən]. But in a part of the Southeast Midland territory which included Suffolk, Essex, and Middlesex the Old English *ē* and *e* which had developed in this region out of earlier *ȳ* and *y* (according to 65, 5, f above) became Middle English [e:] and [ɛ], as in the Kentish dialect; e.g. Northeast Midland *fīr*, *fil(e)n*, extreme Southeast Midland *fer* [fe:r], *felle(n)* [fēllən].
5. Old English *ēo* and *eo* became Early Middle English [œ:] and [œ] but were unrounded to [e:] and [ɛ] in the East Midland region before 1200; in the West Midland region, however, [œ:] and [œ] were preserved as round vowels until at least 1400. The earlier Middle English spelling of these sounds was *eo*, but in the later period they were represented by *o*, *ue*, or *u*; whether the *u* spelling indicates that the sounds had developed into [y:] and [y] is uncertain. E.g. OE *dēor*, East Midland ME *deer*, West Midland ME *duer*, *dur*; OE *heorte*, East Midland ME *herte*, West Midland ME *horte*, *huerte*, *hurte*.

The most reliable morphological criterion for distinguishing between the East Midland and the West Midland dialects is that the feminine nominative singular pronoun *ho* is frequently used in West Midland texts but does not appear to be used in East Midland texts.⁹⁸

⁹⁸ Rather general assent has recently been given to the theory that the texts of the so-called Katherine-group (which includes the *Ancren Riwele*, *St. Juliana*, *St. Katherine*, and *Sawles Warde*) are not Southwestern, as formerly supposed, but West Midland. This theory has been based chiefly or exclusively on the phonological characteristics of the texts and involves serious morphological difficulties.

70. Non-Northern Dialect Characteristics. The Southern and the Midland dialects have in common certain morphological characteristics which are not shared by the Northern dialect:

1. Pronouns.

(a) Both the Southern and the Midland dialects employed the pronouns **heo, he, hi, ho** (*she, they*); **hem** (*them*); and **hire, here** (*their*). The Southern dialect employed these pronouns **exclusively**, but the Midland dialect also employed **she, sho; þei; þeir; þeim, þem**. See 71, 1 below.

(b) Both the early Southern and the early Midland dialects employed the pronoun **his, is** (*her, it, them*).

2. Verbs.

(a) The past participle of strong and weak verbs often had the prefix **i, y**, from Old English *ġe-*; e.g., **icume(n)**, past participle of **cume(n)**; the prefix is commoner in the Southern dialect, however, than in the Midland.

(b) The difference of ablaut in the preterit singular and preterit plural which existed in most of the strong verbs was on the whole retained without much disturbance from analogy (see 57 above).

71. Non-Southern Dialect Characteristics. The Midland and the Northern dialects have in common certain morphological characteristics which are not shared by the Southern dialect:

1. Pronouns.

(a) Both the Midland and the Northern dialects employed the pronoun **she, sho** (*she*). The Northern dialect employed **she, sho exclusively** as the feminine nominative pronoun, but the Midland dialect employed both **she** and **heo, he, hi, ho** (see 70, 1 above). The pronoun **she** was on the whole characteristic of the northern part of the Midland territory, the pronoun **heo, he, hi, ho** was commonest in the southern part of the Midland territory.

(b) Both the Midland and the Northern dialects employed the pronouns **þei** (*they*); **þeir** (*their*); **þeim, þem** (*them*). The Northern dialect employed **þei; þeir; þeim, þem exclusively** as the plural pronouns of the third person, but the Midland

dialect also employed **heo, he, hi, ho; hire, here; hem** (see 70, 1 above). The pronoun **þei**, etc., was most commonly used in the northern part of the Midland territory, the pronoun **heo, he**, etc., was characteristic of the southern part of the Midland territory.

2. Verbs.

(a) Both the Midland and the Northern dialects employed **are(n)** as the present indicative plural of the verb **bee(n)**. The Midland dialect also employed the form **been** or **be** as the present indicative plural of **bee(n)**; **are(n)** was characteristic of the northern part of the Midland territory.

(b) Both the Midland and the Northern dialects employ **-es** as the ending of the present indicative second and third persons singular of verbs. The ending **-es** was the regular ending of the present indicative second and third persons singular in the Northern dialect (see 73, II, 3 below); the Midland dialect used regularly the endings **-est** and **-eþ**, and the ending **-es** (especially for the third person) occurs chiefly in the northern part of the Midland territory.

72. The North Midland and South Midland Dialects. The most important differences between the North Midland and South Midland dialects have already been indicated in the three preceding sections. The principal additions to be made to the statements contained in these sections are: (1) that the North Midland dialect used the Northern present indicative plural ending **-es** occasionally or even frequently alongside of the Midland ending **-e(n)**; and (2) that it used the Northern imperative plural ending **-es** alongside of or even to the exclusion of the Midland ending **-eþ**.

73. The Northern Dialect. The most important characteristics of the Northern dialect are the following:

I. Phonology.

1. Vowel Sounds. The normal development of the Old English vowel sounds in the Northern dialect was identical with that which occurred in the East Midland dialect as stated above in 26, 27 except that Old English **ā** did not become [ɔ:] but remained [a:]; e.g. OE **stān**, Northern ME **stan**, Midland and Southern ME **ston**; Northumbrian and Mercian OE **āld**

(see 65, 2, 7 above), Northern ME **ald**, Midland ME **old**; OE **lānd** (see 65, 7 above), Northern ME **land**, East Midland ME **lond** (see 69, 2, b above).

The special developments of the Old English vowel sounds that occurred in the Northern dialect were identical with those that occurred in the East Midland dialect except in the following respects:

(a) [au] developed instead of Midland and Southern [ɔ:u] (1) out of Old English **ā** followed by **w**; e.g. OE **cnāwan**, Northern ME **knew(e)** [knuə], Midland and Southern ME **knowe(n)** [knɔ:uən].

(2) out of Old English **ā** followed by [ʒ]; e.g. OE **āgan**, Northern ME **aw(e)** [auə], Midland and Southern ME **owe(n)** [ɔ:uən].

(3) out of Old English **ā** followed by **h**; e.g. OE **āh**, Northern ME **augh** [aux], Midland and Southern ME **ough** [ɔ:ux].

(b) Northern Middle English [o:] developed, about the beginning of the fourteenth century, into a sound which is believed to have been similar to or identical with [y:] and which was represented at first by **o** or **u** and later by **o**, **oi**, **u**, or **ui**; e.g. OE **stōd**, early Northern ME **stod** [sto:d], later Northern ME **stod**, **stud**, **stuid**. This sound rimes with the **u** of French loan words that had [y:] in French.

(c) Old English **ō** followed by **g** underwent a similar development and became first [yu] and then [iu] instead of developing into [u:] as in the Midland dialect according to 27, 3, e above; e.g. OE **bōgas**, Northern ME **bewes** [biuəs], Midland ME **bowes** [bu:əs].

(d) Before the end of the fourteenth century the diphthong which had developed out of early Middle English [ai] and [ei] lost its second element in part of the Northern territory (except when final) and became identical with [a:]; e.g. Northern ME **vanys**, Midland ME **veines**; Northern ME **avale**, Midland ME **availe(n)**.

2. Consonant Sounds.

(a) Old English **sc** [ʃ] became [s] in unaccented syllables and in words that were generally pronounced with little stress; e.g. Northern ME **inglis**, Southern and Midland ME **english**; Northern ME **sal**, Southern and Midland ME **shal**; Northern ME **solde**, **sulde**, Southern and Midland ME **sholde**, **shulde**.

(b) Old English **hw** was spelled in the North **qu**; e.g., OE **hwæt**, Northern ME **quat**, Southern and Midland ME **what**, **wat**. The sound represented by the **qu** was probably that of [x] followed by [w].

3. Final **e** and **e(n)**. Final **e** was entirely lost by the middle of the fourteenth century or even earlier. Final **n** of the ending **e(n)** was lost before the beginning of the fourteenth century, except in the past participles of strong verbs.

II. Morphology.⁹⁹

1. Adjectives. With the loss of final **e** all inflection of the adjective was lost.

2. Pronouns. The plural of **his** (*this*) is **þir** or **þer**.

3. Verbs.

(a) The ending of the present indicative first person singular and of the present indicative plural was **-es** unless the subject of the verb was a personal pronoun which immediately preceded or followed the verb, in which case the verb was without ending or had the ending **-e**. The present indicative forms of the verb **find(e)**, for example, were

(1) Sing. 1 **I find(e)**

2 **thou findest**

Plur. **we, ye, they find(e)**

3 **he findest**

(2) Sing. 1 **I that (i.e. who) findest**

2 **thou that findest**

Plur. **we, ye, they that findest**

3 **he that findest**

(b) The ending of the present participle was **-and(e)**.

(c) The ending of the imperative plural was **-es**.

(d) The preterit singular and preterit plural of strong verbs had the same vowel, the difference of ablaut which had existed in most of the strong verbs (see 57 above) being done away with by analogy; in most verbs the preterit plural took the

⁹⁹ With regard to the displacement of historical forms by analogical forms in the inflection of nouns, adjectives, pronouns, and verbs, and with regard to the loss of grammatical gender, the Northern dialect was even less conservative than the Midland dialect.

vowel of the preterit singular. Thus, with the loss of the ending **-e(n)**, the preterit singular and the preterit plural became identical in form; e.g., Northern **he sang, we sang**, Southern and Midland **he sang, we sunge(n)**.

(e) The ending of the past participle of strong verbs was **-en** (never **-e**).

(f) The preposition used with the gerund is either **to** or **at**; e.g. Midland ME **to singe(n)**, Northern ME **to sing(e)** or **at sing(e)**.

PART V

THE LANGUAGE OF CHAUCER

PRONUNCIATION OF CHAUCER'S LANGUAGE

74. Vowels and Diphthongs: Phonetic Notation. The following table shows the vowels and diphthongs of Chaucer's dialect of Middle English, expressed in the phonetic notation given above in section 16, and indicates also the spellings of those sounds which are usually found in the best manuscripts of Chaucer's works.

Sound	Pronunciation	Spelling	Examples
[a:]	like a in father	a, aa	<i>bathed</i> [ba:ðəd] ¹⁰⁰
[ɑ]	" o " fodder	a	<i>that</i> [θat]
[e:]	" a " mate ¹⁰¹	ee, e	<i>swete</i> [swe:tə]
[ɛ:]	" ai " fairy	ee, e	<i>heeth</i> [hɛ:θ]
[ɐ]	" e " met	e	<i>wende</i> [wɛndə]
[i:]	" i " machine ¹⁰¹	i, y	<i>ryde</i> [ri:də]
[i]	" i " bit	i, y	<i>swich</i> [switʃ]
[o:]	" o " note ¹⁰¹	oo, o	<i>roote</i> [ro:tə]
[ɔ:]	" aw " law	oo, o	<i>hooly</i> [hɔ:li]
[ɒ]	" au " audacious	o	<i>folk</i> [fɒlk]
[u:]	" oo " boot ¹⁰¹	ou, ow	<i>fowles</i> [fu:ləs]
[ʊ]	" u " full	u, o	<i>ful</i> [fʊl]

¹⁰⁰ The brackets indicate that the spellings they enclose are phonetic spellings.

¹⁰¹ The Modern English sounds given as the equivalents of Chaucer's [e:], [i:], [o:], and [u:] are only approximate equivalents, for the Modern English sounds which we have represented by these symbols tend to be diphthongs, not simple vowels. Chaucer's [e:], [i:], [o:], and [u:] were simple vowels, pronounced like the corresponding vowels of Modern German. See note 8 above.

[ə]	like	a in about	e	<i>sonne</i> [sʊnnə]
[ɪ]	"	y " pretty	i, y	<i>holy</i> [hɔɪli]
[au]	"	ou in out	au, aw	<i>faught</i> [fauxt]
[æi]	"	[æ] plus [i]	ai, ay, ei, ey	<i>day</i> [dæi], <i>wey</i> [wæi]
[ɛu]	"	[ɛ] plus [u]	eu, ew	<i>fewe</i> [fɛuə]
[iu]	"	[i] plus [u]	u, eu, ew	<i>aventure</i> [aɪvɛntʃurə], <i>reule</i> [riulə]
[oi]	"	oy in boy	oi, oy	<i>coy</i> [kɔi]
[ɔu]	"	[ɔɪ] plus [u]	ou, ow	<i>bowe</i> [bɔuə]
[ou]	"	[ɔ] plus [u]	ou, ow, o	<i>foughten</i> [fɔuxtən]

Unaccented *e*, as in *sonne*, *saide*, *swete*, etc., is called "final *e*." When this final *e* is written but is not pronounced in reading, it is printed as *e* if it is **elided** before a word beginning with a vowel or "weak *h*"; and as *ɛ* if it is **apocopated** before a word beginning with a consonant. Unaccented *e* occurring between two consonants of the same word is also printed as *ɛ* when it is not pronounced in reading, that is when it is **syncopated**. For an explanation of elision, apocopation, and syncopation see section 94 below.

The phonetic symbols for consonant sounds, so far as the sound values of these symbols differ from those which they have in the ordinary spelling of Modern English, are shown in the following table:

Sound	Pronunciation	Spelling	Examples
[ç]	like <i>ch</i> in German	<i>ich</i> gh, h	<i>nyght</i> [nɪçt]
[dʒ]	" j "	<i>jaw</i> g, i	<i>corage</i> [kʊrɑɪdʒə]
[g]	" g "	<i>goat</i> g	<i>goon</i> [gʊɪn]
[hw]	" wh "	<i>while</i> wh	<i>whan</i> [hwan]
[j]	" y "	<i>yes</i> y	<i>you</i> [juɪ]
[ŋ]	" ng "	<i>sing</i> n	<i>thing</i> [θɪŋg]
[s]	" s "	<i>so</i> s, c	<i>soote</i> [soɪtə]
[ʃ]	" sh "	<i>ship</i> sh, ssh, sch	<i>shoures</i> [ʃuɪrəs]
[tʃ]	" ch "	<i>ch'n</i> ch	<i>swich</i> [swɪtʃ]
[θ]	" th "	<i>thin</i> th	<i>breeth</i> [brɛθ]
[ð]	" th "	<i>then</i> th	<i>bathed</i> [bɑθəd]
[x]	" ch " German	<i>nacht</i> gh, h	<i>faught</i> [fauxt]
[z]	" z "	<i>zest</i> s, z	<i>esed</i> [ɛzəd]

[r] in Chaucer's speech was strongly trilled with the tip of the tongue.

75. Chaucer's Prologue in Phonetic Notation. The pronunciation of the first 117 lines of Chaucer's *Prologue* is indicated in the texts printed below. The text on the right hand pages is transcribed in the phonetic

- Whan that Aprille with his shoures soote
 The droghte of March hath perced to the roote,
 And bathed euery veyne in swich licour
 Of which vertu engendred is the flour;
 5 Whan Zephirus eek with his swete breeth
 Inspired hath in euery holt and heeth
 The tendre croppes, and the yonge sonne
 Hath in the Ram his halue cours yronne,
 And smale fowles maken melodye,
 10 That slepen al the nyght with open ye,
 So priketh hem nature in hir corages;
 Thanne longen folk to goon on pilgrimages,
 And palmeres for to seken straunge strondes,
 To ferne halwes kowthe in sondry londes.
 15 And specially from euery shires ende
 Of Engelond to Caunturbury they wende,
 The hooly blisful martir for to seke
 That hem hath holpen whan that they were seeke.
 Bifil that in that seson on a day,
 20 In Southwerk at the Tabard as I lay
 Redy to wenden on my pilgrimage
 To Caunterbury with ful deuout corage,
 At nyght was come in to that hostelrye
 Wel nyne and twenty in a compaignye

notation which has been explained above in sections 16 and 74.¹⁰² The text on the left hand pages is printed in the spelling of the manuscripts.

- hwan þat april wið is ſurəs sortə
 þə druht of martſ hað peirsəd to: þə roitə
 and barðəd eivri væin in swiſ līkuir
 of hwiſ vertju endzendrəd is þə fluir;
 5 hwan zefirys eik wið is sweitə breið
 inspired hað in eivriholt and heið
 þə tēdər kroppəs and þə jūngə sunnə
 hað in þə ram is halvə kuirs iſunnə,
 and smailə fuiləs maikən melodirə,
 10 þat sleipən al þə niçt wið ɔipən iirə,
 so: prikeð hēm naitiur in hīr kyraidzəs;
 þan lōngən folk to: goin ɔn pilgrimaidzəs,
 and palmers for to: seikən straundzə stroindəs,
 to: fērnə halwəs, kurið in sundri lōmdəs.
 15 and spēsiali from eivri ſirəs endə
 of ęngəlond to: kaunturbri θæi wēndə,
 θə hōli blisful martir for to: seikə
 θat hēm hað holpən hwan θat θæi weir seikə.
 biſil θat in θat seizum ɔn a dæi,
 20 in surðwērk at θə tabard as i: læi
 rēdi to: wēndən ɔn mi: pilgrimaidzə
 to: kaunterbri wið ful deivuit kyraidze,
 at niçt was kum in to: θat ɔstelriə
 weil nim and twēnti in a kumpæinirə

¹⁰² The text used is that of Liddell, *The Prologue to the Canterbury Tales*, etc., with some changes of punctuation. All other passages quoted from Chaucer's works follow the text of Skeat's *Student's Chaucer*.

- 25 Of sondry folk, by auenture y-falle
In felaweshipe, and pilgrimes werē they alle,
That toward Caunterbury wolden ryde.
The chambres and the stables weren wyde,
And wel we weren esed atte beste.
- 30 And shortly, whan the sonne was to reste,
So hadde I spoken with hem euerychon
That I was of hir felaweshipe anon,
And made forward erly for to ryse
To take oure wey ther as I yow deuyse.
- 35 But nathelees, whil I hauē tyme and space,
Eer that I ferther in this tale pace,
Me thynketh in acordaunt to resoun
To telle yow al the condicioun
Of ech of hem so as it semed me,
- 40 And whichē they were, and of what degree,
And eek in what array that they were inne;
And at a Knyght than wol I first bigynne.
A Knyght ther was and that a worthy man,
That fro the tyme that he first bigan
- 45 To riden out he loued chiualrie,
Trouthe and honour, fredom and curteisie.
Ful worthy was he in his lordes werre,
And thereto hadde he riden, no man ferre,
As wel in cristendom as in hethenesse,
- 50 And euere honoured for his worthynesse.
At Alisaundre he was whan it was wonne;
Ful ofte tyme he hadde the bord bigonne
Abouen alle nacions in Pruce.
In Lettow hadde he reysed and in Ruce,
- 55 No cristen man so ofte of his degree.

- 25 of sundri folk, biȝ adventjȝur iƿalle
 in ƿelaufjip, and pilgriȝms weȝr þæi allæ,
 þat toȝward kaunterburi wolden riȝðæ.
 þæ tʃambres and þæ stables weȝren wiȝðæ,
 and weil weȝ weȝren eiȝed attæ beȝtæ.
 30 and ʃortli, hwan þæ sunnæ was toȝ reȝtæ,
 soȝ had iȝ spoȝken wiȝ þem eiȝriȝȝin
 þat iȝ was of hiȝ ƿelaufjip anȝin,
 and maȝðæ forȝward eiȝli for toȝ riȝzæ
 toȝ taȝk uȝr wæi þeiȝr as iȝ juȝ deiȝviȝzæ.
 35 buȝt naȝðeȝis, hwiȝl iȝ av tim and spaȝsæ,
 eiȝr þat iȝ ƿerðær in þiȝ taȝle paȝsæ,
 meȝ þiȝnkæþ iȝ akȝordaunt toȝ reiȝzun
 toȝ tællæ juȝ al þæ kȝndiȝjum
 of eiȝȝ of hem soȝ as iȝ seiȝmæð meȝ,
 40 and hwiȝȝ þæi weȝræ, and of hwat deiȝrei,
 and eiȝk in hwat arræi þat þæi weȝr iȝnæ;
 and at a kȝiȝt þan wȝl iȝ fiȝst biȝiȝnnæ.
 a kȝiȝt þeiȝr was and þat a wȝrðiȝ man,
 þat froȝ þæ timæ þat heȝ fiȝst biȝan
 45 toȝ riȝðen uit heȝ lȝvæð tʃiȝvalriȝæ,
 trouȝð and ȝnuȝr, freȝdom and kȝrtæȝiȝiȝæ.
 fȝl wȝrðiȝ was eiȝ in iȝs lȝrðæs ȝeræ,
 and þeiȝrtȝ had eiȝ riȝðen, nȝȝ man ƿeræ,
 as weil in kȝriȝtændȝm as in heȝrðenessæ,
 50 and eiȝvr ȝnuȝræð for iȝs wȝrðiȝnessæ.
 at aliȝsaundȝr eiȝ was hwan iȝ was wȝnnæ;
 fȝl ȝftæ tim heȝ had þæ boȝrd biȝȝnnæ
 abȝvæn allæ naȝiȝjȝms in ƿriȝsæ.
 in lȝtȝuȝ had eiȝ ræȝzæð and in riȝsæ,
 55 nȝȝ kȝriȝtæn man soȝ ȝft of hiȝ deiȝrei.

- In Gernade at the seege eek hadde he be
 Of Algezir and riden in Belmarye.
 At Lyeys was he and at Satalye.
 Whan they werē wonne, and in the Grete See.
 60 At many a noble armee hadde he be.
 At mortal bataillēs hadde he been fiftene,
 And foughten for ourē feith at Tramyssene
 In lystes thries, and ay slayn his foo.
 This ilke worthy knyght hadde been also
 65 Sometyme with the lord of Palatye
 Agayn another hethen in Turkye;
 And euerēmoore he hadde a souereyn prys.
 And though that he werē worthy, he was wys,
 And of his port as meeke as is a mayde.
 70 He neuere yet no vileynyē ne sayde
 In al his lyf vnto no maner wight.
 He was a verray parfit, gentil knyght.
 But for to tellen yow of his array,
 His hors werē goode, but he was nat gay;
 75 Of fustian he wered a gypon
 Al bismoterēd with his habergeon,
 For he was late y-come from his viage
 And wente for to doon his pilgrimage.
 With hym ther was his sone, a yong Squier,
 80 A louyere and a lusty bachelor,
 With lokkes crulle, as they werē leyd in presse.
 Of twenty yeer of age he was, I gesse;
 Of his stature he was of euēne lengthe
 And wonderly delyuere and of greet strengthe;
 85 And he hadde been sometyme in chyuachie
 In Flaundres, in Artoys, and Pycardie,

- in gernald at þæ seidz eik had ei bei
 of aldgezir and riden in belmaris;
 at liæis was ei and at satalis
 hwan þæi weir wun, and at þæ greitæ sei.
 60 at man a nobel armer had ei bei
 at mortel batæils had ei bein fiftainæ,
 and fouxten for uir fæiθ at tramseina
 in listæs θrisæs and æi slæin is for.
 65 θis ilkæ wurði kniçt had bein also
 sumtimæ wiθ þæ lird of palatisæ
 agæin anorðer heirden in turkisæ;
 and eiværmær he had a svvræin priis.
 and θoux θat he weir wurði he was wiis,
 and of is port as meik as is a mæidæ.
 70 he neivær jæt nœ vilæini; næ sæidæ
 in al is lif unto; nœ manær wiçt.
 he was a verræi parfæt dzentil kniçt.
 byt for to; tellæn ju; of his arræi,
 his hors weir goidæ byt ei was nat gæi;
 75 of fustian he weiræd a dzipum
 al bismutærd wiθ is aberdzum,
 for he was last ikum from his viraidzæ
 and wentæ for to; doin is pilgrimaidzæ.
 wiθ im θeir was his sun, a jung skwiær,
 80 a luvjer and a lusti batseleir,
 wiθ lokkæs krul, as þæi weir læid in præssæ.
 of twenti jær of aidz ei was, i; gæssæ;
 of his statjur he was of evnæ lepggθæ
 and wunderli deilivr and of greit strenggθæ;
 85 and he had bein sumtim in tsjvatšisæ
 in flaundræs, in artois, and pikardisæ,

- And born hym weel, as of so litel space,
 In hope to stonden in his lady grace.
 Embrouded was he, as it were a meede
 90 Al ful of fresshe floures whyte and reede;
 Syngynge he was or floytynge al the day;
 He was as fressh as is the monthe of May.
 Short was his gowne with sleues long and wyde;
 Wel koude he sitte on hors and faire ryde;
 95 He koude songes make and wel endite,
 Iuste and eek daunce and weel purtreye and write.
 So hootē he loued that by nyghtertale
 He sleep namoorē than dooth a nyghtyngale.
 Curteis he was, lowely and seruysable,
 100 And carf biforn his fader at the table.
 A Yeman hadde he and seruantz namo
 At that tyme, for hym liste ride soo,
 And he was clad in cote and hood of grene.
 A sheef of pecok arwes, bright and kene,
 105 Vnder his belt he bar ful thriftily—
 Wel koude he dresse his takel yemanly,
 His arwes drouped noght with fetheres lowe—
 And in his hand he baar a myghty bowe.
 A not heed hadde he, with a broun visage;
 110 Of woodecraft wel koude he al the vsage.
 Vpon his arm he baar a gay bracer
 And by his syde a swerd and a bokeler,
 And on that oother syde a gay daggere
 Harneised wel and sharp as point of spere;
 115 A Cristophre on his brest of siluer sheene,
 An horn he bar, the bawdryk was of grene;
 A forster was he soothly, as I gesse.

- and boȝn ġm weil, as of soȝ lītēl spaȝe,
 ġn hoȝp toȝ stōndēn ġn ġs lārde graȝe.
 90 ġmbrūdēd was eȝ as ġt weȝr a mēide
 al ful of frēȝe flūrēs hwīt and rēide;
 singgīng eȝ was oȝ flōtīng al θē dāi;
 heȝ was as frēȝ as ġs θē moīnθ of mēi.
 Šort was ġs guīn, wīθ sleivēs lōng and wīde;
 weil kūrde eȝ sīt oȝ hōrs and fāire rīde;
 95 heȝ kūrde sōnges mārke and weil ġndīte,
 dȝȝst and eȝk dauns, and weil pȝrtrēi and wrīte.
 soȝ hōit heȝ lȝvōd θat bī nīȝtērtāle
 heȝ sleȝp namōȝr θan dōiθ a nīȝtīngāle.
 kȝrtāis eȝ was, lōrūl and sērvīzarēl,
 100 and karf bīfōȝrn ġs fādēr at θē tārēl.
 a ġerman had eȝ and sērvants namōȝr
 at θat tīm, fōȝ ġm līstē rīde soȝ
 and heȝ was klād ġn kōit and hōid of grēinē.
 a šēif of pēikōk arwēs, brīȝt and keīnē,
 105 ȝndēr ġs bēlt heȝ bār ful θrīftīl—
 weil kūrde eȝ drēs ġs takēl ġermanlī,
 hīȝ arwēs drūpēd nōxt wīθ fēðrēs lōrūē—
 and ġn ġs hand heȝ bār a mīȝtī bōrūē.
 a nōt hēid had eȝ wīθ a brūīn vīzardȝē.
 110 of wōrdēkraft weil kūrde eȝ al θī ġūzardȝē.
 ȝpōn ġs arm heȝ bār a gāi brāseȝr
 and bī ġs sīd a sweȝrd and a bȝkēlēȝr,
 and oȝn θat oȝðēr sīd a gāi dageȝrē
 harnēizēd weil and šarp as pōint of špēȝrē;
 115 a krīstōfȝr oȝn ġs brēst of šīlvēr šēīnē,
 an hōrn eȝ bār, θē baudrīk was of grēīnē;
 a fōrstēr was eȝ soȝθlī, as ġ ġēssē.

76. Relation of Sounds to Spelling. The spelling of the vowels and diphthongs in the manuscripts of Chaucer's works is far from phonetic. In a phonetic system of spelling each character represents one sound, and only one. In the manuscripts of Chaucer, however,

a	represents	[a:] or [a]
aa	"	[a:]
e	"	[e:], [ɛ:], or [ɛ]
ee	"	[e:] or [ɛ:]
i	"	[i:] or [i]
o	"	[o:], [ɔ:], [ɔ], [u], or [ɔu]
oo	"	[o:] or [ɔ:]
ou	"	[u:], [ɔ:u], or [ɔu]
u	"	[u] or [iu]
y	"	[i:] or [i]

But in spite of these ambiguities of spelling, the pronunciation of a word in Chaucer's dialect can usually be inferred from the pronunciation of the word in Modern English.

aa or a	represents	[a:] if in MnE the vowel is [e:]; ME <i>name</i> [na:me], MnE [ne:ɪm].
a	"	[a] if in MnE the vowel is [æ]; ME <i>that</i> [θat], MnE [ðæt].
ee or e	"	[e:] or [ɛ:] if in MnE the vowel is [i:]; ME <i>swete</i> [swe:te], MnE [swi:t]; ME <i>heeth</i> [he:θ], MnE [hi:θ].
e	"	[ɛ] if in MnE the vowel is [e]; ME <i>wende</i> [wɛndə], MnE [wɛnd].
i or y	"	[i:] if in MnE the vowel is [ai]; ME <i>ryde</i> [ri:də], MnE [raid].
i or y	"	[i] if in MnE the vowel is [i]; ME <i>riden</i> [ri:dən], MnE [ri:dn].
oo or o	"	[o:] if in MnE the vowel is [u:]; ME <i>rote</i> [ro:te], MnE [ru:t].
oo or o	"	[ɔ:] if in MnE the vowel is [o:]; ME <i>hooly</i> [ho:li], MnE [ho:li].
o	"	[ɔ] if in MnE the vowel is [a]; ME <i>oxe</i> [ɔksə], MnE [aks]. ¹⁰³

¹⁰³ In the dialect of most parts of the United States, ME [ɔ] has become [a], but the ME vowel (or a vowel much like it) has been retained in the speech of England and New England.

o	represents	[ʊ] if in MnE the vowel is [ʌ]; ME <i>some</i> [sʊnə], MnE [sʌn].
o	"	[ɔu] if in MnE the vowel is [ɔ:]; ME <i>thought</i> [bɔuxt]; MnE [θɔ:t].
ou or ow	"	[u:] if in MnE the vowel is [au]; ME <i>hous</i> [hu:s], MnE [haus].
ou or ow	"	[ɔ:u] if in MnE the vowel is [o:]; ME <i>bowe</i> [bɔ:uə], MnE [bo:].
ou	"	[ɔu] if in MnE the vowel is [ɔ:]; ME <i>foughte</i> [fɔuxtə], MnE [fɔ:t].
u	"	[ʊ] if in MnE the vowel is [ʌ]; ME <i>under</i> [ʏndər], MnE [ʌndr].
u	"	[ju:] if in MnE the vowel is [ju:] or [iu] or [u:]; ME <i>humour</i> [hjumʊr], MnE [hju:mɹ] or [hjumr]; ME <i>rude</i> [rjudə], MnE [ru:d].

But the characters **ai**, **ay**, **ei**, and **ey** always represent the diphthong [æi] and the characters **au** and **aw** always represent the diphthong [au]. The characters **eu** and **ew** nearly always represent the diphthong [iu]; they represent the diphthong [ɛu] only in *dew*, *dew*; *dronkelewe*, *ad-dicted to drink*; *fewe*, *few*; *hewen*, *hew*; *lewed*, *ignorant*; *rewe*, *row*; *shewen*, *show*; *shrewe*, *shrew*; *thewes*, *habits*, and possibly one or two other words.

The character **o** represents the diphthong [ɔu] only when [x], spelled **gh** or **h**, follows.

77. The basis of the statements just made is that tho the pronunciation of the English vowel sounds has changed greatly since Chaucer's time, it has changed in a systematic and consistent way. Middle English [ɔ:] has regularly developed into Modern English [o:]; [hɔ:ɫ] has become [ho:ɫ], [bɔ:t] has become [bo:t], [ɔ:pən] has become [o:pən], [sɔ:] has become [so:]. That is, under the same conditions, a given Middle English sound has always developed into a certain corresponding Modern English sound.

But the conditions are *not* always the same. The development of a sound is often affected by the influence of other sounds which precede or follow it. Thus, Middle English [ʊ] regularly developed into Modern English [ʌ]; [sʊnnə] has become [sʌn], [ʏndər] has become [ʌndr], [lʏvə] has become [lʌv]. But when Middle English [ʊ] was preceded by a lip

consonant (**b**, **p**, **f**, or **w**) and was followed by **l**, it has been preserved in Modern English; e.g., Middle English [**bʊlə**], [**pʊllə**], [**fʊl**], and [**wʊlf**] are Modern English [**bʊl**], [**pʊl**], [**fʊl**], and [**wʊlf**]. Moreover, vowels change not only in quality, but also in quantity. Long vowels may become short, and short vowels may become long. For example, in a number of words Middle English [**o:**], which has regularly become [**u:**] in Modern English, is represented by Modern English [**u**]. This is not because Middle English [**o:**] has in these words changed to [**u**] instead of [**u:**], but because, after [**o:**] had become [**u:**], the [**u:**] was shortened to [**u**]. Thus we have Modern English [**ɡʊd**], [**hʊd**], and [**stʊd**] from Middle English [**ɡo:ɖ**], [**ho:ɖ**], [**sto:ɖ**]. So also with Modern English [**brɛθ**] from Middle English [**brɛ:θ**]; Middle English [**ɛ:**] regularly changed to early Modern English [**e:**], which later became [**i:**], but in this case the vowel was shortened to [**ɛ**] before the change to [**i:**] occurred.

78. The statements, therefore, that have been made with regard to the relation between Middle English sounds and Modern English sounds are not sufficient to enable us to determine the pronunciation of *all* Middle English words. But where the evidence of the Modern English pronunciation is not clear, it is generally possible to determine the Middle English pronunciation of a *native* English word from a knowledge of its pronunciation in Old English.¹⁰⁴

aa or a		represents [ɑ:] if in OE the vowel was a or æ in an open syllable; ¹⁰⁵ OE nama , fæder ; ME name , fader
a	"	[ɑ] if in OE the vowel was a , æ or ea in a closed syllable; ¹⁰⁶ OE þanc , þæt , hearm ; ME thank , that , harm
ee or e	"	[e:] if in OE the vowel was ē or ēo ; OE swēte , bēon ; ME swete , been
ee or e	"	[ɛ:] if in OE the vowel was ĕa , or e in an open syllable; OE strēam , mete ; ME streem , mete

¹⁰⁴ Likewise, the pronunciation of ME words that were borrowed from French can be determined from a knowledge of their pronunciation in Old French; the Modern French pronunciation of such words is often different.

¹⁰⁵ An open syllable is one that ends in a vowel; in words of two or more syllables a single consonant following a vowel belongs to the following syllable; so in OE **nama**, **fæder**, **mete**, and **stolen**, **a**, **æ**, **e**, and **o** were in open syllables.

¹⁰⁶ A closed syllable is one that ends in a consonant; examples of vowels in closed syllables are **a**, **æ**, **e**, and **o** in OE **þanc**, **þæt**, **helpan**, and **oxa**.

e	represents [e] if in OE the vowel was e or eo in a closed syllable; OE helpan , eorðe ; ME helpen , erthe
i or y	" [i:] if in OE the vowel was ī or ȳ ; OE ridan , fȳr ; ME riden , fyr
i or y	" [i] if in OE the vowel was i or y ; OE drincan , fyllan ; ME drinken , fillen
oo or o	" [o:] if in OE the vowel was ō ; OE dōn ; ME don
oo or o	" [ɔ:] if in OE the vowel was ā , or o in an open syllable; OE hālīg , stolen ; ME hooly , stolen
o	" [ɒ] if in OE the vowel was o in a closed syllable; OE oxa ; ME oxe
o	" [ʊ] if in OE the vowel was u ; OE sunu ; ME sone
ou	" [u:] if in OE the vowel was ū ; OE hūs ; ME hous
u	" [ʊ] if in OE the vowel was u ; OE under ; ME under

By the application of the rules that have been given in these sections one is able to ascertain the pronunciation of the great majority of the words that occur in Chaucer's works. These rules, however, are merely a practical application of our knowledge of the history of English pronunciation, which is treated systematically in Part II of this book. The student is therefore recommended to go on, after learning the use of the rules, to a study of Part II in order that he may better understand the principles on which the rules are based.

79. Consonant Sounds. The consonant sounds present much less difficulty to the student of Chaucer than the vowel sounds because the changes in pronunciation that have occurred since Chaucer's time have affected the consonants much less extensively than the vowels. The principal points of difference are the following:

1. Initial **g**, **k**, and **w** were pronounced in the combinations **gn**, **kn**, and **wr**: ME **gnawe** [gnauə], **knight** [kniçt], **write** [wri:tə]; MnE [nɔ:], [naɪt], [raɪt].
2. **ng** was always pronounced [ŋg]: ME **yong** [jʊŋg], **singe** [sɪŋgə]; MnE [jʌŋ], [sɪŋ].
3. **l** was pronounced before **f**, **k**, and **m**: ME **half** [half], **folk** [fɒlk], **palmer** [palmɐr]; MnE [hæ:f] or [ha:f], [fɔ:k], [pa:mr].
4. Final **ɛ** was always pronounced [s] and initial **th** was always pronounced [θ]: ME **was** [was], **his** [hɪs], **houses** [hu:zəs]; MnE [waz], [hɪz], [haʊzəz]; ME **that** [θat], **than** [θan]; MnE [ðæt], [ðæn].

5. The suffix corresponding to MnE *-tion* was pronounced [sju:n] (two syllables) in ME: ME *nacioun* [na:sju:n], *condicioun* [kɔndisju:n]; MnE *nation* [ne:ʃən], *condition* [kəndiʃən].
6. Double consonants were pronounced double (as in MnE *pen-knife*, *book-case*, *gull-like*): ME *sonne* [sunnə], *alle* [allə].

It should be observed that the letters *u* and *v* were interchangeable in Chaucer's time. For example, in the text printed above the letter *u* represents the sound [v] in *euery* and *halue*, lines 3 and 8, and the letter *v* represents the vowel [u] in *Vnder*, line 105.

INFLECTIONS OF CHAUCER'S LANGUAGE

80. Declension of Nouns. The regular inflection of nouns in Chaucer, as exemplified by *dom*, *judgment*, and *ende*, *end*, is as follows:

Sing. Nom., Dat., Acc.	dom	ende
Gen.	domes	endes
Plur. Nom., Gen., Dat., Acc.	domes	endes

The following exceptions occur:

1. The genitive singular of proper nouns ending in *s* is frequently without ending; e.g., *Epicurus owne sone*, A 336.
2. The genitive singular of nouns of relationship ending in *r* is sometimes without ending; e.g., *my fader soule*, A 781; *brother sone*, A 3084.¹⁰⁷
3. The genitive singular of nouns which belonged to the Old English "weak" declension is sometimes without ending; e.g., *his lady grace*, A 88; *the sonne up-riste*, A 1051.¹⁰⁸
4. The plural frequently ends in *s* instead of *es*; e.g., *naciouns*, A 53; *hunters*, A 178; *fees*, A 317; this is particularly common in words of one syllable ending in a vowel and in words of two syllables ending in a consonant. The ending *-es* is often written when only *s* is sounded; e.g., *yeddinges*, A 237.

¹⁰⁷ These nouns had no ending in the genitive singular in Old English.

¹⁰⁸ The Old English genitive singulars of Chaucer's *lady* and *sonne* were *hlæfdigan* and *sunnan*, which in early Middle English became *ladie(n)* and *sunne(n)*; the *n* in parenthesis being a sound which was very often lost. The genitive singulars *lady* and *sonne* in Chaucer are the early Middle English forms without *n*, the three syllables of early Middle English *ladie* having been reduced to two.

5. The plural of some nouns ends in **en** instead of **es**; e.g., *eyen*, A 152; *children*, A 1193.¹⁰⁹
6. The plural of monosyllabic nouns ending in **s** is usually without ending; e.g., *caas*, A 323.
7. Some nouns which had no ending in the nominative and accusative plural in Old English have no plural ending in Chaucer; e.g., *hors*, A 74; *swyn*, A 598; *yeer*, A 82.¹¹⁰
8. The dative singular has the same form as the nominative-accusative singular, but in certain phrases consisting of a preposition immediately followed by a noun the noun has the old dative ending **-e**; e.g., *of towne*, A 566.¹¹¹

81. Declension of Adjectives. In Middle English, as in Modern German, there are two declensions of the adjective, the strong and the weak. The weak declension of the adjective is used when it is preceded by the definite article **the**, by a demonstrative (**this** or **that**), by a possessive pronoun, or by a noun in the genitive case; e.g., *the yonge sonne*, A 7; *this ilke monk*, A 175; *his halue cours*, A 8; *Epicurus owne sone*, A 336; the weak declension is also used when the adjective precedes a noun used in direct address; e.g., *faire fresshe May*, A 1511; it may also be used when the adjective precedes a proper name not used in direct address; e.g., *faire Venus*, A 2663.

The forms of the strong and weak declensions of the adjectives **good** and **swete** are as follows:

Strong Declension

Singular	good	swete
Plural	goode	swete

Weak Declension

Singular	goode	swete
Plural	goode	swete

¹⁰⁹ Some of these nouns, such as *eyen*, belonged in Old English to the weak declension, which had the ending **-an** in the nominative and accusative plural. Others, such as *children*, from Old English *cild*, plural *cildru*, did not belong in Old English to the weak declension but assumed the weak ending **-en** in Middle English from the analogy of nouns which had been weak in Old English.

¹¹⁰ These were neuter nouns in Old English.

¹¹¹ See note 121 below.

It will be observed that (1) adjectives like **swete** are invariable in form; (2) adjectives like **good** have in the strong declension the ending **-e** in the plural; (3) adjectives like **good** have in the weak declension the ending **-e** in both singular and plural.

The following exceptions occur:

1. Plural adjectives used predicatively are often not inflected, tho such adjectives are frequently written with a final **e** even when the **e** is not sounded; e.g., *whiche they weren*, A 40; *And of another thing they were as fayn*, A 2707.
2. Adjectives of two or more syllables ending in a consonant are usually not inflected, either in the plural or in the circumstances which call for the use of the weak inflection; e. g., *mortal batailles*, A 61; *He which that hath the shortest shal biginne*, A 836.
3. A trace of the old genitive plural of the adjective **all** appears occasionally in the form **aller**, **alder** (from Old English **ealra**, genitive plural of **eal**); e. g., *hir aller cappe*, "the cap of them all," A 586; *alderbest*, "best of all," A 710.

82. Personal Pronouns. The personal pronouns are inflected as follows in Chaucer; forms that are rare are placed in parentheses.

1. First and second persons:

Sing. Nom.	I, (ich)	thou
Gen.	my, myn	thy, thyn
Dat., Acc.	me	the
Plur. Nom.	we	ye
Gen.	our, ourę, (oure)	your [ju:r], yourę, (youre)
Dat., Acc.	us	you [ju:]

2. Third person:

Sing. Nom.	he	she	hit, it
Gen.	his	hir, hire, (hire);	his
		her, here, (here)	
Dat., Acc.	hym	hir, hire, (hire);	
		her, here, (here)	hit, it
Plur. Nom.		they	
Gen.		hir, hire, (hire); her, here, (here)	
Dat., Acc.		hem	

83. **Demonstratives.** The demonstratives **this** and **that** are inflected as follows in Chaucer; forms that are rare are placed in parentheses.

Sing.	this	that
Plur.	this, thise, (thise); thes, these, (these)	tho [θo:]

A trace of the old dative singular of **that** appears in the phrase *for the nones*, A 379, from Old English *for þæm ānes* (literally "for that once"); the early Middle English form of this phrase was *for then ones*, which by incorrect word division, came to be written in Chaucer's time *for the nones*. A survival of the old instrumental case of **that** appears in the adverbial **the** (Old English *þē*); e.g., *the more mery*, A 802, literally "more merry by that."

The demonstrative **that** is historically the same word as the definite article **the**, for both are derived from Old English *sē, sēo, þæt*, which was used both as demonstrative and article. Survivals of the Old English and early Middle English use of **that** in the function of article appear in such expressions as *that other syde*, A 113.

84. **Strong and Weak Verbs.** In Middle English, as in Old English and all other Germanic languages, there are two conjugations of verbs, the strong and the weak. Weak verbs form their preterit by means of a suffix containing **d** or **t**. Strong verbs form their preterit by means of a change in the vowel of the stem of the verb. For example, the preterits of the weak verb **loven** and the strong verb **riden** are as follows:

Pret. Ind. Sing.	1	lovede, loved	rood
	2	lovedest	ride
	3	lovede, loved	rood
Plur.		lovede(n)¹¹², loved	ride(n)

Weak verbs may be recognized from the fact that their preterit indicative first and third persons singular ends in **-ede, -ed, -de, or -te** and from the fact that their past participle ends in **-ed, d, or t**. Strong verbs may be

¹¹² **e(n)** indicates that the ending **-en** interchanges with the ending **-e**. This interchange of **-en** and **-e** was the result of a general tendency to the loss of final **n** in unstressed syllables which began in very early Middle English but which was never fully carried out in Chaucer's dialect. Survivals of the Middle English double forms still exist in the Modern English past participles (for)**gotten**, (for)**got**; **broken, broke**; **frozen, froze**, etc.

recognized from the fact that their preterit indicative first and third persons singular is **without ending**, and from the fact that their past participle ends in **-en** or **e**.

85. Endings of Weak Verbs. There are two types of weak verbs in Middle English. Weak verbs of Type I have preterits ending in **-ede** or **-ed** and past participles ending in **-ed**. Weak verbs of Type II have preterits ending in **-de** or **-te** and past participles ending in **-ed**, **d**, or **t**. The principal parts of representative verbs are as follows:

Type I	love(n)	lovede, lovede, loved	loved
	stire(n)	stired, stired, stired	stired
Type II	here(n)	herde	herd
	fele(n)	felte	feled, felt
	fede(n)	fedde	fed
	seke(n)	soughte	sought ¹¹³

The endings of the weak verbs, exemplified by **love(n)** of Type I and **here(n)** of Type II, are as follows:

Pres. Ind. Sing.	1 lov-e	her-e
	2 lov-est	her-est
	3 lov-eth	her-eth
Plur.	lov-e(n)	her-e(n)
Pret. Ind. Sing.	1 lov-ede, lov-edē, lov-ed	her-de
	2 lov-edest	her-dest
	3 lov-ede, lov-edē, lov-ed	her-de
Plur.	lov-ede(n), lov-edē, lov-ed	her-de(n)
Pres. Subj. Sing.	lov-e	her-e
Plur.	lov-e(n)	her-e(n)
Pret. Subj. Sing.	lov-ede, lov-edē, lov-ed	her-de
Plur.	lov-ede(n), lov-edē, lov-ed	her-de(n)
Imperative Sing.	lov-e	her
Plur.	lov-eth, lov-e	her-eth, her-e
Infinitive	lov-e(n)	her-e(n)
Gerund	to lov-e(n)	to her-e(n)
Pres. Participle	lov-ingē, lov-ingē, lov-ing	her-ingē, her-ingē, her-ing
Past Participle	lov-ed	her-d

¹¹³ The past participles of both strong and weak verbs often have the prefix **-y** (from the OE prefix **-ge**); e.g. *yronne* A8, *yfalle* A 25, *ytaught* A127 *ywroght* A 196.

86. Endings of Strong Verbs. Strong verbs form their preterit by means of a change in the vowel of the stem of the verb. The vowel of the preterit plural is often different from that of the preterit singular, so that there are four principal parts, the infinitive, the preterit indicative first person singular, the preterit indicative plural, and the past participle.¹¹⁴ The principal parts of representative strong verbs are as follows:

ride(n) [ri:dən]	rood [rʊ:d]	ride(n) [ɾidən]	ride(n) [ɾidən]
crepe(n) [kre:pən]	creep [kre:p]	crope(n) [krɔ:pən]	crope(n) [krɔ:pən]
binde(n) [bi:ndən]	bond [bɔ:nd]	bounde(n) [bu:ndən]	bounde(n) [bu:ndən]
helpe(n) [hɛlpən]	halp [hɒlp]	holpe(n) [hɒlpən]	holpe(n) [hɒlpən]
sterve(n) [stɛrvən]	starf [stɒrf]	storve(n) [stɔrvən]	storve(n) [stɔrvən]
bere(n) [bɛ:rən]	bar [bɒr]	bere(n) [be:rən]	bore(n) [bɔ:rən]
	baar [ba:ɪr]	bare(n) [ba:rən]	
	beer [be:ɪr]		
speke(n) [spɛ:kən]	spak [spɒk]	speke(n) [spe:kən]	spoke(n) [spɔ:kən]
		spake(n) [spɔ:kən]	
shake(n) [ʃa:kən]	shook [ʃo:k]	shoke(n) [ʃo:kən]	shake(n) [ʃa:kən]
slepe(n) [sle:pən]	sleep [sle:p]	slepe(n) [sle:pən]	slepe(n) [sle:pən]
holde(n) [hɔ:ldən]	heeld [he:ld]	helde(n) [he:ldən]	holde(n) [hɔ:ldən]

The endings of the strong verbs, exemplified by **ride(n)** and **bere(n)**, are as follows:

Pres. Ind. Sing. 1	rid-e	ber-e
2	rid-est	ber-est
3	rid-eth, rit [ɾɪt] ¹¹⁵	ber-eth
Plur.	rid-e(n)	ber-e(n)
Pret. Ind. Sing. 1	rood	bar
2	rid-e, rood	ber-e, bar
3	rood	bar
Plur.	rid-e(n)	ber-e(n)

¹¹⁴ The vowel of the infinitive occurs also in the present indicative, present subjunctive, imperative, gerund, and present participle; the vowel of the preterit indicative first person singular occurs also in the preterit indicative third person singular; the vowel of the preterit indicative plural occurs also in the preterit indicative **second person singular** and in the preterit subjunctive; the vowel of the past participle occurs in that form only.

¹¹⁵ Contracted forms like **rit** are frequent in verbs whose stems end in **d** or **t**; the contraction originated in Old English.

Pres. Subj. Sing.	rid-e	ber-e
Plur.	rid-e(n)	ber-e(n)
Pret. Subj. Sing.	rid-e	ber-e
Plur.	rid-e(n)	ber-e(n)
Imperative Sing.	rid	ber
Plur.	rid-eth, rid-e	ber-eth, ber-e
Infinitive	rid-e(n)	ber-e(n)
Gerund	to rid-e(n)	to ber-e(n)
Pres. Participle	rid-ingē, rid-ingē, rid-ing	ber-ingē, ber-ingē, ber-ing
Past Participle	rid-e(n)	ber-e(n)

87. Preteritive-Present Verbs. The preteritive-present (or strong-weak) verbs have **present** indicatives which are like the **preterit** indicatives of strong verbs in that they have no ending in the first and third persons singular.¹¹⁶ The **preterits** of these verbs are **weak**. The principal forms of the more important preteritive-present verbs that occur in Chaucer are as follows:

Pres. Ind. Sing. 1	<i>can, be able, know how</i>	<i>dar, dare</i>
2	<i>canst</i>	<i>darst</i>
3	<i>can</i>	<i>dar</i>
Plur.	<i>conne(n) [kʊnnən], can</i>	<i>dorre(n) [dʊrrən], dar</i>
Pret. Ind. Sing. 1	<i>couthe[ku:ðə],coude[ku:də]</i>	<i>dorste [dʊrstə]</i>
Pres. Ind. Sing. 1	<i>may, be able</i>	<i>moot, be permitted, be under obligation</i>
2	<i>mayst</i>	<i>most</i>
3	<i>may</i>	<i>moot</i>
Plur.	<i>mowe(n) [mu:ən], may</i>	<i>mote(n), moot</i>
Pret. Ind. Sing. 1	<i>mighte [mɪçtə]</i>	<i>moste</i>
Pres. Ind. Sing. 1	<i>shal, be about to, be under obligation</i>	<i>wot [wɔ:t], know</i>
2	<i>shalt</i>	<i>wost [wɔ:st]</i>
3	<i>shal</i>	<i>wot</i>
Plur.	<i>shulle(n), shul, shal</i>	<i>wite(n), wot</i>
Pret. Ind. Sing. 1	<i>sholde [ʃʊldə], [ʃo:ldə]; shulde</i>	<i>wiste</i>

¹¹⁶ See note 78 above.

88. **Anomalous Verbs.** The forms of **bee(n)**, *be*, are as follows:

Pres. Ind. Sing.	1 am
	2 art
	3 is
	Plur. bee(n) [be:n], be [be:]
Pret. Ind. Sing.	1 was
	2 were [wɛ:rə]
	3 was
	Plur. were(n) [wɛ:rən]
Pres. Subj. Sing.	be
	Plur. bee(n) , be
Pret. Subj. Sing.	were
	Plur. were(n)
Imperative Sing.	be
	Plur. beeth , be
Infinitive	bee(n) , be
Gerund	to bee(n) , to be
Pres. Participle	being
Past Participle	bee(n) , be

The forms of **wille(n)**, *will*, are as follows:

Pres. Ind. Sing.	1 wil , wol [wʊl]
	2 wilt , wolt
	3 wil , wol
	Plur. wille(n) , wolle(n) , wil , wol
Pret. Ind. Sing.	1 wolde [wɔ:ldə]
	2 woldest
	3 wolde
	Plur. wolde(n)
Pret. Subj. Sing.	wolde
	Plur. wolde(n)
Infinitive	wille(n)
Past Participle	wold

FINAL **e** IN CHAUCER'S LANGUAGE

89. **Inflectional and Etymological Final e.** Final **e** in Chaucer's language is either **inflectional** or **etymological**. Inflectional final **e**'s are those which occur in some forms of a word but not in others, their

occurrence or non-occurrence depending on grammatical considerations. For example, the adjective **good** has no final **e** in such an expression as *A good man was ther of religioun* (A 477), but it has a final **e** in the expressions *His hors were gode* (A 74) and *his gode name* (A 3049). In A 74 **gode** has a final **e** because it is a **plural** adjective, in A 3049 it has a final **e** because it is a **weak** adjective (see 81 above); but in A 477 **good** is without final **e** because it is neither plural nor weak. On the other hand, the adjective **lene** has a final **e** in the expression *As lene was his hors as is a rake* (A 287) tho it is neither plural nor weak. The explanation of the final **e** in **lene** is not grammatical but etymological; the word has a final **e** because it ended in **e** in Old English, being derived from Old English **hlāne**. But Middle English **good** is derived from Old English **gōd**. Final **e** in **goode** is inflectional, final **e** in **lene** is etymological.

90. **Inflectional Final e.** Inflectional final **e** occurs in adjectives and verbs.

1. Adjectives (see 81 above)

Final **e** occurs:

- a. In the weak form of the adjective
- b. In the plural form of the adjective¹¹⁷

2. Verbs (see 85-87 above)

Final **e** occurs:

- a. In the present indicative first person singular of **strong** and **weak** verbs
- b. In the preterit indicative first and third persons singular of **weak** verbs
- c. In the preterit indicative second person singular of **strong** verbs
- d. In the present subjunctive singular of **strong** and **weak** verbs
- e. In the preterit subjunctive singular of **strong** and **weak** verbs
- f. In the imperative singular of many **weak** verbs
- g. Sometimes in the gerund of **monosyllabic** verbs, e.g., *to done*, F 334¹¹⁸

¹¹⁷ When it modifies a plural noun the pronoun **his** is very commonly written **hise** in good manuscripts, and the final **e** is sometimes pronounced. This final **e** is from the analogy of the final **e** of plural adjectives. So also is the final **e** of **these**, **thise**, plural of **thes**, **this** (see 83 above).

¹¹⁸ The gerund in OE was made up of the proposition **tō** and an inflected form of the infinitive having the ending **-e**, e.g. **tō rīdenne**. Even in OE, however, gerunds with an uninflected infinitive, e.g. **tō rīdan**, appear occasionally. In ME the inflected

- h. In the present participle of **strong** and **weak** verbs e.g. **sing-inge**, A 91¹¹⁹

Final **e** interchanging with **en** occurs:

- i. In the present indicative plural of **strong** and **weak** verbs
- j. In the preterit indicative plural of **strong** and **weak** verbs
- k. In the present subjunctive plural of **strong** and **weak** verbs
- l. In the preterit subjunctive plural of **strong** and **weak** verbs
- m. In the infinitive and gerund of **strong** and **weak** verbs
- n. In the past participle of **strong** verbs¹²⁰

91. **Etymological Final e.** Etymological final **e** occurs in nouns, adjectives, pronouns, adverbs, prepositions, and conjunctions.

1. Nouns

Final **e** occurs:

- a. In nouns derived from Old English nouns which ended in a vowel (**a**, **e**, or **u**); e.g., **tyme**, from OE **tīma** (A 44); **sonne**, from OE **sunne** (A 7); **tale**, from OE **talū** (A 36)
- b. In nouns derived from Old English **feminine** nouns which ended in a consonant; e.g., **reste**, from OE **rest**, fem. (A 30)
- c. In some nouns derived from Old English nouns ending in **-en**; e.g., **mayde**, from OE **mægden** (A 69)
- d. In nouns derived from Old French nouns ending in **e**; e.g., **corage**, from OFr **corage** (A 22)

infinitive became less and less common in the gerund, so that for most verbs the usual form of the gerund was **to ridden** or **to ride**. The inflected infinitive still occurs sometimes in Chaucer in the gerunds of verbs like **doon** and **seen** which have monosyllabic infinitives.

¹¹⁹ The present participle should be distinguished from the verbal noun in **-inge** or **-ing** (e.g. **winning**, A 275, **lerninge**, A 300, **turneyinge**, A 2557) which corresponds historically to the OE verbal nouns in **-ing** or **-ung**. But OE had only a limited number of these verbal nouns, whereas in ME they were formed with the greatest freedom, even from verbs of French derivation. The OE verbal nouns in **-ing** or **-ung** were feminines, and like other feminines ending in a consonant acquired a final **-e**, in ME (see 91, b below). But they occur more frequently in Chaucer without final **-e**.

¹²⁰ For simplicity the preteritive-present verbs are ignored in this paragraph. Their preterits are like those of weak verbs, and their present indicative plural either has the ending **-e(n)** or is without ending. (See 87 above.)

- e. In the "petrified" dative which occurs in certain phrases consisting of a preposition immediately followed by a noun; e.g., **out of towne** (A 566)¹²¹

2. Adjectives

Final **e** occurs:

- a. In adjectives derived from Old English adjectives ending in **e**; e.g., **lene**, from OE **hlāne** (A 287)
- b. In the comparative form of a few adjectives; e.g., **more**, from OE **māra**, **māre**¹²²
- c. In the "petrified" dative which occurs in certain phrases consisting of a preposition immediately followed by an adjective used as a noun; e.g., **with-alle** (A 127)
- d. In adjectives derived from Old French adjectives ending in **e**; e.g., **straunge**, from OFr **estrange** (A 13)

3. Pronouns

Final **e** is usually written and occasionally pronounced in **oure**, from OE **ūre**; in **hire**, **here** (*her*), from OE **hire**; and in **hire**, **here** (*their*) from OE **hira**, **heora**

4. Adverbs, Prepositions, and Conjunctions

Final **e** occurs:

- a. In adverbs derived from adjectives; e.g., **faire** (A 94), from the adjective **fair** (A 154)
- b. In adverbs, prepositions, and conjunctions whose originals had a final vowel in Old English; e.g., **sonne**, from OE **sōna** (B 1702); **thanne**, from OE **þonne** (D 2004); **inne**, from OE **inne** (A 41); **whanne**, from OE **hwonne** (F 1406)
- c. In adverbs, prepositions, and conjunctions whose originals in Old English ended in **-an**; e.g., **bifore**, from OE **beforan** (A 377); **with-oute**, from OE **wipūtan** (A 343); **siþe**, from OE **sipþan**

¹²¹ The final **e** in **of towne** is not a genuine inflection in the English of Chaucer's time. In early Middle English the dative singular always ended in **e**, but in the course of time the accusative was substituted for the dative wherever the two cases differed in form. A few phrases, however, like **of towne**, **on live**, **to bedde**, etc., were in such constant use that they were preserved long after the dative form had become obsolete in the language as a whole. We find therefore that Chaucer says **of towne** in A 566, but **of the toun** in A 217.

¹²² The usual comparative ending is **-er**.

92. Inorganic Final e. A few nouns and adjectives in Middle English had final *e*'s (not inflectional) which cannot be explained upon any of the grounds stated in 91; e.g., **hewe** (F 587), from OE **hiw**, neut.; **weye** (B 385), from OE **weġ**, masc.; **pere** (F 678), from OFr **per**; **bare** (A 683), from OE **bær**; **harde** (G 665), from OE **heard**. Such final *e*'s we call **inorganic final e**'s. These words acquired final *e* in early Middle English as the result of some analogy which in most cases we are not able to trace with certainty.

93. Scribal e. Occasionally even in the best and earliest manuscripts of Chaucer, and frequently in the later manuscripts, final *e*'s are written which were never pronounced in Middle English. For example, in the Lansdowne MS of the *Canterbury Tales*, written early in the fifteenth century, the rime words of A 43f. are written **manne** and **be-ganne**. Such *e*'s we call **scribal e**'s.

94. Elision, Apocope, and Syncope. If one pronounces in reading Chaucer's verse all the final *e*'s that are grammatically or etymologically justifiable, the metrical structure of the verse is often seriously impaired or entirely destroyed. It is clear that Chaucer did not intend that every possible final *e* should be sounded. Final *e* is usually **elided** when the following word begins with a vowel or "weak *h*";¹²³ e.g., in **couthe** (A 14) and **dresse** (A 106). Moreover, final *e* is often lost before words beginning with a consonant; e.g., **wiste** (A 224), **tyme** (A 102), **mete** (A 136). The loss of final *e* before consonants is called **apocope** or **apocopation**. This is to be distinguished from **syncope** or **syncopation**, which is the loss of a vowel **between** two consonants of the same word; e.g., "*Cometh neer*," *quod he*, "*my lady prioress*" (A 839). In using apocopated forms in his verse, however, Chaucer was not doing violence to the language of his time, as a modern writer would be doing if he omitted the final vowel of *navy* or *china*. In Chaucer's time the final *e* was beginning to be lost, and by the end of the fifteenth century it had entirely disappeared from the language. In Chaucer's time the final *e* was still pronounced, but not universally, so that double forms with and without final *e* were in use. Chaucer used the apocopated forms freely within the line, but neither apocope nor elision occur at the end of the line in his verse.

¹²³ "Weak *h*" is the *h* in words like **he**, **him**, **hem**, **her**, **hath**, **hadde**, etc., in which the *h* was pronounced only when the word was strongly stressed, and the silent *h* in French words like **honour**, etc.

PART VI

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF MODERN ENGLISH INFLECTIONS

95. Relation of Modern English to Middle English. The term Middle English is a convenient way of speaking of a number of local dialects of English which were used during a period lasting roughly from about 1050 or 1100 to about 1450 or 1500. The chief dialect regions were the Southern, the Kentish, the Midland (subdivided into North and South and East and West Midland), and the Northern. These local dialects, as may be seen from a study of Part IV of this book, differed greatly from each other both in sounds and grammatical forms.

The local dialects of Middle English were not merely spoken varieties of English, but each local dialect had its corresponding written form which was intended to represent the spoken forms of that dialect and which did represent the spoken forms of the dialect as accurately as the varying skill of the writers and the inadequacy of their alphabet permitted. And the written forms of these various local dialects were used not only for records and memoranda of merely local, temporary, or utilitarian value, but were also the media in which the literary works of the Middle English period were written until about 1450. Until after this date no one written form of English was used over the whole or even over the greater part of England, just as no one spoken form of English was used outside of its own particular region.

We find, however, that the written form of the literary works and documents composed in the Southern, Kentish, West Midland, and Northern regions after about 1450 (or even a little earlier) becomes increasingly less representative of the spoken forms of the regions in which these writings originated and approximates more and more closely to a common standard. By about 1500 this written form of English, which we may now call Standard Written English, had come into such general use that even informal writings such as private letters and family papers seldom contain linguistic evidence

of their local origin. The written form of English which thus displaced the written forms of the other dialects was that which was used by those whose spoken language was the dialect of London.

The dialect of London appears to have been originally of the type which is called Southeastern, but between about 1250 and 1350 most of the more specifically Southeastern and Southern characteristics of the London dialect were displaced by the forms of the Southeast Midland dialect. Between about 1350 and 1500 the London dialect underwent further modification and approximated more closely at the end of the Middle English period to the Northeast Midland dialect type. And even after 1500 at least one change took place in the spoken English of London which assimilated it still more closely to the Northeast Midland dialect type, namely the substitution of *-(e)s* for *-eth* as the ending of the present indicative third person singular of verbs.¹²⁴

Standard Written English did not retain thruout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the form which it had between 1450 and 1500 when the written form of the London dialect first became the standard written form of English, but underwent a development that reflected changes that were taking place during the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries in the spoken English of London.

96. Standard Written English and Standard Spoken English.

The establishment of a standard written form of English must be distinguished from the establishment of a standard form of spoken English. After the written form of the London dialect had been accepted as Standard Written English, the other local dialects still continued to be spoken and their derivatives are still spoken by certain classes in England, Scotland, and Ireland today. The London type of spoken English must, however, have become very much more widely diffused among certain classes during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries than it was at an earlier period, for all the types of spoken English now used thruout the English-speaking world except the local dialects of England, Scotland, and Ireland are derivable from sixteenth century or seventeenth century London English. At least none of these varieties of spoken English exhibits either in its sounds or its inflections characteristics that indicate derivation from

¹²⁴ This change began in the latter part of the fifteenth century but was not completed until after 1500.

any other local dialect than the dialect of London. But there is no one variety of spoken English that is common even to the educated and superior classes thruout the English-speaking world. In England itself there are important differences between the speech of southern and northern Englishmen of the superior class. And when we consider all the varieties of English spoken by those who are admitted to speak "good English" in the different British colonies and in different parts of the United States, we must recognise that there is still no Standard Spoken English in any strict sense of the term. In every part of the English-speaking world some type of spoken English, that which is used by the educated and superior class within the community; is considered "good English," as contrasted with the "Vulgar English" and local dialects spoken by other classes of the community. If we use the term Standard Spoken English at all we must recognise that it is merely a convenient way of speaking of the various kinds of "good English" that are current in various parts of the English-speaking world.

97. Middle English and Modern English Inflections. The Modern English development of the Middle English inflectional forms was very different both in its results and in its causes from the Middle English development of the inflectional forms of Old English. When we compare the inflectional forms of Modern English with those of late Middle English (e.g. the dialect of Chaucer), we find no such radical differences as we find when we compare the inflectional forms of late Middle English with those of Old English. The Middle English development of the Old English inflectional forms resulted in a complete transformation of the inflectional pattern of nouns, adjectives, and pronouns and changed it from a rather highly inflected language to one having relatively few and simple inflections (see 31 above). The Modern English development of the Middle English inflectional forms resulted in a complete loss of inflection in the adjective and in some simplification of the inflectional forms of verbs, but in very little simplification of the inflectional forms of nouns and pronouns. Speaking very generally, we may say that the Modern English development resulted in numerous *changes* of inflectional forms but not in any great *reduction* of inflectional forms or in any great modification of the *system* or pattern of inflectional forms.

The Middle English development of the Old English inflectional forms was chiefly the result of two causes, **sound-change** and **analogy** (see 32, 33 above). The Modern English development was chiefly the result of sound-change; some analogical changes took place, but the analogical changes were very much less numerous and less important than those that took place in the earlier period.

The language of Chaucer is the form of Middle English that has been most thoroly investigated and is most generally known; Chaucer's language, moreover, was the dialect of London, which was the source of both the written and the spoken form of Modern English.¹²⁵ For these two reasons it is appropriate to take Chaucer's language as the norm of Middle English in a comparison of the inflectional forms of Middle English with those of Modern English. But the source of Modern English was not the London dialect of the second half of the fourteenth century, in which Chaucer lived, but the London dialect of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, for we have seen that the London dialect developed after 1350 from a Southeast Midland to a Northeast Midland type of speech. The basis of our comparison of Middle English with Modern English will therefore be the Southeast Midland forms of Chaucer's dialect supplemented when necessary by the Northeast Midland forms that established themselves in the London dialect in the 250 years following Chaucer's death. It is the purpose of the following sections to trace the processes by which these Middle English forms developed into the forms of Modern English.

NOUNS

98. Regular Noun Inflection. Both in Late Middle English and in Modern English the regular inflection of nouns has two singular forms and a common plural form; one of the singular forms is genitive, the other is the common form used wherever the genitive is not used. There were two types of regular nouns in Middle English: (1) those whose common singular form ended in [ə]; (2) those whose common singular form ended in a consonant or in some other vowel than [ə]. The Modern English development of the Middle English forms is shown in the following tables.

¹²⁵ By Modern English is meant (here and elsewhere in this book) Standard Spoken English, in the sense in which that term is defined at the end of section 96 above.

	Middle English ¹²⁶	Modern English ¹²⁷	Middle English	Modern English
Sing. Common	tre [trei]	[tri]	son [sʊnə]	[sʌn]
Gen.	trees [treiəs]	[tri:z]	sones [sʊnəs]	[sʌnz]
Plur. Common	trees [treiəs]	[tri:z]	sones [sʊnəs]	[sʌnz]
Sing. Common	book [boik]	[bʊk]	roote [roitə]	[ru:t]
Gen.	bokes [boikəs]	[bʊks]	rootes [roitəs]	[ru:ts]
Plur. Common	bokes [boikəs]	[bʊks]	rootes [roitəs]	[ru:ts]
Sing. Common	bush [buʃ]	[bʊʃ]	chirche [tʃɪrtʃə]	[tʃɪrtʃ]
Gen.	bushes [buʃəs]	[bʊʃəz]	chirches [tʃɪrtʃəs]	[tʃɪrtʃəz]
Plur. Common	bushes [buʃəs]	[bʊʃəz]	chirches [tʃɪrtʃəs]	[tʃɪrtʃəz]

This development of the Middle English forms was the result of the following sound-changes that occurred in late Middle English or early Modern English in the order in which they are given here:

1. Final [əs] changed in late Middle English (according to 30, 2, p. 35 above) to [əz], so that [treiəs], [boikəs], and [tʃɪrtʃəs] became [treiəz], [boikəz], and [tʃɪrtʃəz];
2. Final [ə] was lost at the end of the Middle English period (according to 29, II, 1 above), so that [sʊnə], [roitə], and [tʃɪrtʃə] have become [sʌn], [ru:t], and [tʃɪrtʃ];
3. The [ə] of the ending [əz] was syncopated at the very end of the Middle English period or the beginning of the Modern English period, except after [s], [z], [ʃ], [tʃ], and [dʒ] (according to 29, II, 2 above), so that late Middle English [treiəz] and [sʊnəz] became Modern English [tri:z] and [sʌnz], but the full ending remains in Modern English [bʊʃəz] and [tʃɪrtʃəz];
4. The final voiced sound [z] was assimilated, after syncopation of the [ə] had occurred, to preceding voiceless consonants and became the corresponding voiceless sound [s], so that late Middle English [boikəz] and [roitəz] developed, after syncopation of [ə] and assimilation of [z], into Modern English

¹²⁶ Unless otherwise stated, the Middle English forms used in this and the following sections are those of Chaucer's dialect, taken as the representative of the London dialect of the second half of the fourteenth century.

¹²⁷ The Modern English forms used in this and the following sections are the *spoken* forms of English as they exist in my own type of speech. In certain other types of speech the endings [ɪz] and [ɪd] are used in place of my [əz] and [əd]. In Middle English also the corresponding endings probably varied between [əs], [əd] and [ɪs], [ɪd]; see note 58 above.

[bʊks] and [ruits]; the late Middle English [z] remained, however, when it was preceded by a voiced sound, either vowel or consonant, as in Modern English [tri:z], [sʌnz], [bʊʃəz], [tʃɜ:rtʃəz].

The result of this development has been that there are three types of regular nouns in Modern English: (1) those whose common singular form ends in some voiced sound other than [z] or [dʒ] and whose genitive singular and common plural form ends in [z]; (2) those whose singular common form ends in some voiceless consonant other than [s], [ʃ], or [tʃ] and whose genitive singular and common plural form ends in [s]; and (3) those whose common singular form ends in [z], [dʒ], [s], [ʃ], or [tʃ] and whose genitive singular and plural common form ends in [əz].

99. Irregular Noun Inflection. The following groups of nouns have inflectional forms which do not conform to any of the three types defined in the preceding section:

1. A few nouns (including *wife*, *life*, *calf*; *mouth*, *bath*, *path*, *lath*; *house*) whose singular common form ends in [f], [θ], or [s] have a genitive singular form of the regular type, i.e., ending in [fs], [θs], or [səz], but plural common forms ending in [vz], [ðz], or [zəz]; the Modern English development of the Middle English forms of a typical word of this group is shown below.

	MIDDLE ENGLISH	MODERN ENGLISH
Sing. Common	wif [wi:f]	[waɪf]
Gen.	wives [wi:vəs]	[waɪfs] <i>wife's</i>
Plur. Common	wives [wi:vəs]	[waɪvz]

Modern English [waɪf] and [waɪvz] developed out of Middle English [wi:f] and [wi:vəs] by sound-change; that is, they are the Middle English forms pronounced in the Modern English way.¹²⁸ Such

¹²⁸ The interchange between [f] and [v], [θ] and [ð], [s] and [z] which appears in [waɪf]-[waɪvz], [maʊθ]-[maʊðz], [haus]-[haʊzəz], etc., goes back to the Old English period, and the "irregularity" of the Modern English forms is due ultimately to the fact that in Old English the open consonants spelled *f*, *þ* or *ð*, and *s* were always voiceless when they were initial or final but voiced (unless they were doubled) when they occurred between voiced sounds. See 24 above. Other Modern English illustrations of this interchange are *thief* from OE *þeof* and *thieve* (from OE *þeofian*); *south* (from OE *sūþ*) and *southern* (from OE *sūðerne*); *grass* (from OE *græs*) and *graze* (from OE *grasian*).

forms we may call historical forms. Modern English [**waifs**], on the other hand, is not the product of sound-change but is a new formation that developed in early Modern English on the analogy of the regular noun inflection. The fact that it is an analogical form is indicated in the table by printing *wife's* in italic type.

2. A small group of nouns (*man, woman, foot, tooth, goose, mouse, louse*) have a genitive singular of the regular type, a plural common form with vowel change but with no ending, and also a genitive plural with both vowel change and the ending [z], [s], or [əz]. The Modern English development of a typical word of this group is shown below.

	MIDDLE ENGLISH	MODERN ENGLISH
Sing. Common	man [mæn]	[mæn]
Gen.	mannes [mannəs]	[mænz]
Plur. Common	men [mɛn]	[mɛn]
Gen.	mennes [mɛnnəs]	[mɛnz]

The Modern English forms are all historical forms, developed from the Middle English forms by sound-change alone. Middle English [mæn]-[mɛn], [fo:t]-[fe:t], [to:θ]-[te:θ], [go:s]-[ge:s], [mu:s]-[mi:s], and [lu:s]-[li:s] were just as much irregularities in Middle English as their Modern English developments [mæn]-[mɛn], [fʊt]-[fi:t], [tu:θ]-[ti:θ], [gu:s]-[gi:s], [maus]-[mais], and [laus]-[lais] are irregularities in Modern English. And the Middle English forms were the historical development of Old English plural forms that constituted a rather isolated group even in Old English.¹²⁹

Modern English [wʊmən]-[wɪmən], however, tho it has a plural common form with vowel change but no ending, has not developed from the Middle English forms by sound change alone. In Middle English the word had two sets of forms, [wʊmman]-[wʊmmɛn] and [wɪmman]-[wɪmmɛn], both sets derived from Old English **wifman-wifmen**, a compound of **man-men**. But either in very late Middle English or early Modern English a redistribution of forms occurred which resulted in restricting the [ʊ] forms to the singular and the [ɪ] forms to the plural. The vowel change that appears in Modern English [wʊmən]-[wɪmən], therefore, has an entirely different origin from the vowel change that appears in [mæn]-[mɛn], [fʊt]-[fi:t], etc.

¹²⁹ The Middle English genitive plural forms of these nouns, however, were analogical forms that developed in late Middle English.

3. Three nouns have a genitive singular of the regular type, a plural common form with the ending [ən], and a genitive plural form with the ending [ənz]. The Modern English development of these three nouns is shown below.

	MIDDLE ENGLISH	MODERN ENGLISH
Sing. Common	oxe [ɔksə]	[aks]
Gen.	oxes [ɔksəs]	[aksəz]
Plur. Common	oxen [ɔksən]	[aksən]
Gen.	oxen [ɔksən]	[aksənz] <i>oxen's</i>
Sing. Common	child [tʃi:ld]	[tʃaɪld]
Gen.	childes [tʃi:ldəs]	[tʃaɪldz]
Plur. Common	children [tʃɪldrən]	[tʃɪldrən]
Gen.	children [tʃɪldrən]	[tʃɪldrənz] <i>children's</i>
Sing. Common	brother [bro:ðər]	[brʌðr]
Gen.	brother [bro:ðər] ¹³⁰	
	brothres [bro:ðrəs]	[brʌðrz]
Plur. Common	brethren [brɛðrən]	[brɛðrən]
	brothres [bro:ðrəs]	[brʌðrz]
Gen.	brethren [brɛðrən]	[brɛðrənz] <i>brethren's</i>
	brothres [bro:ðrəs]	[brʌðrz]

The Modern English forms are all historical forms except the genitive plurals *oxen's*, *children's*, and *brethren's*. These forms (which are printed in italics to distinguish them from the historical forms that developed by sound-change) are analogical forms that developed in early Modern English.

These words with **-en** plurals were exceptional even in late Middle English, but the "weak" type of inflection which they represent was very common in Old English (for the Old English forms and the Middle English development see 43-45 above). The only word of the group which originally had this type of inflection is *ox-oxen*, but the weak type of plural inflection was extended in early Middle English (see 47 above) to many nouns which in Old English had other types of inflection, and *children* and *brethren* are the Modern English survivals of these Middle English analogical plurals in **-en**. The Old English nominative plural forms were *cildru* [tʃɪldru] and *brēðru*

¹³⁰ The genitive singular was originally uninflected in Old English and the inflected form was an analogical development.

[bre:ðru],¹³¹ which developed into Middle English **childre** [tʃildrə], and **brethre** [brɛðrə], later **children** and **brethren**.

4. Two nouns, *sheep* and *deer*, have a genitive singular of the regular type, a plural common form which is identical with the singular common form, and a genitive plural form which is identical with the genitive singular. The Modern English development of the typical word *sheep* is shown below.

	MIDDLE ENGLISH	MODERN ENGLISH
Sing. Common	sheep [ʃeɪp]	[ʃi:p]
Gen.	sheepes [ʃeɪpəs]	[ʃi:ps]
Plur. Common	sheep [ʃeɪp]	[ʃi:p]
Gen.		[ʃi:ps] <i>sheeps'</i>

The Modern English genitive singular and plural common are historical forms, but the genitive plural *sheeps'* is an early Modern English analogical formation, as is indicated by printing it in italics.¹³²

Both these nouns were neuter nouns in Old English, and the inflectional type which they represent, tho exceptional even in late Middle English (see 80, 7 above), was very common in Old English (for the Old English forms see 41 above).¹³³

We may sum up this historical account of Modern English noun inflections¹³⁴ by saying that the regular noun inflections are wholly

¹³¹ The form **brēðru** is not recorded in Old English but is inferred from the Middle English forms; the plural **ēldru** represents an inflectional type that was rare even in Old English.

¹³² The genitive plural of these nouns is rarely used even in Modern English and I have not been able to find late Middle English examples; it is possible that an analogical form developed in Middle English.

¹³³ A somewhat large and rather indefinite number of Modern English nouns (mostly names of fishes, birds, or units of measurement) have either an uninflected plural common form or the regular plural in [z], [s], or [əz], but the use of one or other of the two plural forms is determined by differences of meaning or of syntax; examples are *trout*, *snipe*, *year*, *pound*, *dozen*. Modern English *fish*, tho it was inflected according to the regular noun declension in Middle English and early Modern English, now has an uninflected plural when used in one sense and a regular plural when used in another; it was masculine, not neuter, in Old English. Some of these nouns (e.g. *year* and *pound*) are derived from Old English neuters of the same inflectional type as *sheep* and *deer*, but they do not strictly belong to the *sheep-deer* group in Modern English.

¹³⁴ All the changes of word form that strictly belong to an account of an account of the development of Modern English noun inflections are included in 98 and 99. The other matters (such as the use of the apostrophe and of *s* or *es* in the spelling of the

and the irregular noun inflections predominantly the product of sound-change alone; analogical developments were few and unimportant. In this respect the Modern English development presents a striking contrast to the Middle English development of the Old English noun inflections, as may be seen from the summary of the Middle English analogical changes given in 46 above.

ADJECTIVES

100. Inflection of Adjectives. There were two types of adjectives in late Middle English. The dissyllabic adjectives that ended in [ə] were invariable in form.¹³⁵ Monosyllabic adjectives like **good** had a plural form that ended in [ə] and two singular forms, the **strong** and the **weak**. The weak form, which ended in [ə], was used if the adjective was preceded by the definite article **the**, by a demonstrative (**this** or **that**), by a possessive pronoun, or by a noun in the genitive case, or if it modified a noun used in direct address. The strong form, which had no ending, was used except under the conditions which called for the use of the weak form. (For examples from Chaucer see 81, 89 above.) The Modern English development of the Middle English forms of the typical adjectives **good** and **swete** is shown in the following table.

		MIDDLE ENGLISH	MODERN ENGLISH
Singular	Strong	good [go:d]	swete [swe:tə]
	Weak	goode [go:də]	swete [swe:tə]
Plural		goode [go:də]	swete [swe:tə]

It is obvious that the Modern English development was the result wholly of a sound-change, the loss of the final [ə] in the presence or absence of which consisted the sole difference between the two types

plural; the nouns with double plurals like *pennies* and *pence*; foreign plurals; words used only in the plural; and the distinction between *actor* and *actress*) are partly matters of orthography, which does not belong to grammar at all, partly matters that belong to the dictionary rather than the grammar, and partly matters that belong to syntax rather than morphology.

¹³⁵ Adjectives that had two or more syllables and that ended in some other sound than [ə] were sometimes inflected like the monosyllabic adjectives but were usually not inflected at all. See 81, 2 above.

of adjectives and between the inflected and the uninflected forms of adjectives like **good**.¹³⁶

PRONOUNS

101. The Modern English forms of pronominal words are for the most part historical forms, developed from the Middle English forms by the regular processes of sound-change, but **its** is an analogical formation and the nominative and singular uses of **you** may roughly be called syntactical developments. When we consider the development in detail, however, we find that the relations between the Middle English and the Modern English forms is less simple than would seem to be implied by the generalization just made. The development of pronominal words is always complicated by the fact that most words of this class have strong forms which are used when the pronoun is stressed and weak forms which are used when the pronoun is not stressed (see 21 above). These strong and weak forms are never phonetically identical. If the strong form has a long vowel, the weak form will have a half-long or short vowel which may be of the same quality or of somewhat different quality (cf. Modern English [wi] and [wi]). If the strong form has a short vowel, the vowel of the weak form will be somewhat shorter and possibly "obscured" (cf. Modern English [ʌs] and [əs]). Now when we consider that the strong forms are stressed syllables and that the weak forms are unstressed syllables; that the sound changes that take place in stressed syllables are seldom identical with those that take place in unstressed syllables (cf. 29 above); and that the sound-changes undergone by long vowels are frequently different from those undergone by short vowels, we see that when pronouns are affected by sound-change the resulting strong and weak forms are apt to be less similar than they were before the sound-change took place. But if the dissimilarity is very great, either the strong or weak form is likely to be modified by becoming assimilated to the other, so that similarity between the two is restored.

For example, the strong form of the objective case of the second person plural pronoun in Middle English was **you** [ju] and the corre-

¹³⁶ The comparative and superlative adjectives ending in [r] and [əst] are derivatives rather than inflectional forms, and the comparatives and superlatives formed by prefixing *more* and *most* are neither inflectional forms nor derivatives but syntactical groups. The comparison of adjectives, therefore, is not a part of morphology.

sponding weak form was probably [jʊ]. The regular phonetic development of the Middle English strong form would have been [jau], and there existed in very early Modern English a form which had the diphthong [au] or some similar diphthong. The Middle English weak form [jʊ], however, remained in very early Modern English, for the change of [ʊ] to [ʌ] did not occur until the seventeenth century. The Modern English strong form [ju:] is the result of restressing the weak form [jʊ], the process of restressing naturally resulting in lengthening the vowel and changing its quality. The opposite process is illustrated in Modern English [əs], the weak form of [ʌs]. The late Middle English strong form was [ʊs], which has developed regularly into [ʌs]. The late Middle English weak form was probably [ʊz], (final [s] becoming [z] in the unstressed syllable according to 30, 2 above), which would have developed into Modern English [əz]. The Modern English weak form [əs], therefore, is probably not derived from the late Middle English weak form but is the result of destressing the Modern English strong form [ʌs].¹³⁷

The historical relations between the Modern English strong forms of the pronouns and the Middle English strong forms is shown in the following sections.¹³⁸ Unless it is otherwise stated, the Modern English forms developed from the Middle English forms by the regular processes of sound-change.

¹³⁷ I owe the term *restressing* to Prof. J. S. Kenyon (*American Pronunciation*, pp. 157-9) and have improvised the term *destressing* to designate the reverse process.

¹³⁸ A detailed account of the historical development of the Modern English weak forms would involve space-consuming complexities that would be inconsistent with the plan of this book, and the weak forms are therefore dealt with only when they are of special interest. In many cases they are probably the result of destressing the Modern English strong forms; e.g. Modern English [əi], the weak form of [ai], cannot possibly have developed from the Middle English weak form, which was [i] or [i]. In other cases the Modern English weak form that would have developed from the Middle English weak form is the same as that which would have resulted from destressing the Modern English strong form; e.g. [ʃi], the weak form of [ʃi:], would be the regular development of the Middle English weak form [ʃe] according to 29, II, 1 above and would also be the result of destressing the Modern English strong form. In still other cases, one of the Modern English weak forms might have developed from the Middle English weak form and another be a destressed form; e.g. Modern English [ɹ], a weak form of [aʊr], might have developed from Middle English [ʊr] or [ʊr], but the weak form [ər] must have resulted from destressing the Modern English strong form. A convenient list of strong and weak forms of pronouns, auxiliaries, prepositions, etc., may be found in Kenyon's *American Pronunciation*, pp. 151 ff.

102. First Personal Pronoun.

	MIDDLE ENGLISH	MODERN ENGLISH
Sing. Nom.	I [i:]	[aɪ]
Gen.	my [mi:] myn [mi:n] ¹³⁹	[maɪ]
Obj.	me [me:]	[mi:]
Plur. Nom.	we [we:]	[wi:]
Gen.	oure [uɪrə], our [u:r]	[aʊr], [aʊr̩], [a:r] ¹⁴⁰
Obj.	us [ʊs]	[ʌs] ¹⁴¹

103. Second Personal Pronoun.

	MIDDLE ENGLISH	EARLY MODERN ENGLISH	MODERN ENGLISH
Sing. Nom.	thou [θu:]	[ðau], [ji:], [ju:]	[ju:]
Gen.	thy [θi:], thyn [θi:n] ¹³⁹	[ðai], [ðain], [ju:r]	[ju:r]
Obj.	thee [θe:]	[ði:], [ju:]	[ju:]
Plur. Nom.	ye [je:]	[ji:], [ju:]	[ju:]
Gen.	your [ju:r]	[ju:r]	[ju:r]
Obj.	you [ju:]	[ju:]	[ju:]

The Modern English development here is by no means simple. The occurrence in Modern English [ju:] and [ju:r] of a simple vowel in place of the diphthong that developed from Middle English [u:] has already been accounted for in 101, but three other points require explanation.

1. Modern English [ð] in place of Middle English [θ] is probably the result of the influence of the weak forms, which (being unstressed syllables) would have [ð] according to 30, 2, page 35 above.

2. The use of **ye**, **your**, **you** as singular pronouns was at first a ceremonious use employed only by persons of the upper class in addressing those who were their superiors in rank. This practice began at least as early as the fourteenth century. Later the singular use of the plural pronouns was employed with less and less discrimination until, in the latter part of the sixteenth century, the old singular

¹³⁹ There was a certain tendency to use [mi:n] and [θi:n] before words beginning with vowels or **h** and [mi:] and [θi:] before words beginning with a consonant when these words were used attributively (immediately before or after the word they modified).

¹⁴⁰ The special development of [aʊr] into [a:r] occurs not only in this word but in all the words in which the combination exists.

¹⁴¹ For the development of the Modern English weak form, see 101 above.

pronouns were ordinarily used only in addressing those who were admittedly inferiors and in addressing familiarly equals with whom one was on intimate terms. After 1600 the colloquial use of the old singular pronouns became less and less frequent and finally obsolete.¹⁴²

3. The use of **you** instead of **ye** as the nominative form of the second personal pronoun occurs occasionally as early as the fourteenth century and increased until before the end of the seventeenth century the colloquial use of **ye** was obsolete. In Shakespeare's works **you** occurs more often than **ye** as the nominative form. This development appears to have been the result of a complex of causes in which sound-changes, analogy, and syntactic changes all had a part. The investigation of this phenomenon is complicated by the fact that the nominative use of **you** is not an isolated phenomenon, for the nominative use of objective forms of the pronouns (and, tho less frequently, the objective use of the nominative forms) has been common since the sixteenth century and is common in spoken English today.¹⁴³

104. Third Personal Pronoun. All of the strong forms of the third personal pronoun except **its** are historical forms. The earliest example of **its** that has so far been discovered is dated 1598; the form occurs 10 times in the First Folio of Shakespeare but not in any earlier editions, and did not come into general literary use until the second half of the seventeenth century, tho it must have been in colloquial use at least as early as the latter part of the sixteenth century. The development of **its** was facilitated by the fact that **it** was used as a neuter genitive singular form from the fourteenth century on. The genitive form **its** was based on the analogy of the regular genitive singular of nouns (*its: it: : cat's : cat*).

The genitive and objective plural forms of the third personal pronoun illustrate the change that took place in London English between 1350 and 1500 (see 95 above), for the Modern English forms are derived from the Northeast Midland forms which belonged to the

¹⁴² Even now the old singular pronouns of the second person have a quasi-colloquial use in prayer. This use of the singular pronouns seems to have no relation to their ordinary sixteenth century use but to be the result of a conservative tendency which has maintained in this one field the strictly singular function which these pronouns had previous to the fourteenth century.

¹⁴³ The fullest discussion of these case-shiftings in pronouns is in Jespersen's *Progress in Language, with Special Reference to English*, chapter VII. The nominative use of *you* is dealt with particularly in section 152 and on pp. 188ff., 197-208.

London dialect in 1500, not from the Southeast Midland forms which were used in the fourteenth century London English of Chaucer.

The Modern English development is shown in the following tables.

MIDDLE ENGLISH

	Southeast Midland	Northeast Midland	Early Modern English	Modern English
Masculine				
Sing. Nom.	he [he:]			[hi:]
Gen.	his [hɪs]			[hɪz] ¹⁴⁴
Obj.	him [hɪm]			[hɪm]
Feminine				
Sing. Nom.	she [ʃe:]			[ʃi:]
Gen.	hir(e) [hɪrə], [hɪr]			[hɛ:r]
	her(e) [hɛrə], [hɛr]			
Obj.	hir(e), [hɪrə], [hɪr]			[hɛ:r]
	her(e) [hɛrə], [hɛr]			
Neuter				
Sing. Nom.	hit [hɪt], it [ɪt]			[ɪt]
Gen.	his [hɪs]	hit [hɪt], it [ɪt]	[hɪz], [hɪt], [ɪt]	[ɪts]
Obj.	hit [hɪt], it [ɪt]			[ɪt]
Plural				
Nom.	they [θæi]			[ðɛi], [ðe:] ¹⁴⁵
Gen.	hir(e) [hɪrə], [hɪr]			
	her(e) [hɛrə], [hɛr]	their [θæir]		[ðɛ:r]
Obj.	hem [hɛm]	them [θɛm]		[ðɛm], [əɪm] ¹⁴⁶

105. Absolute Forms of Possessive. The Modern English absolute forms of the genitive (or possessive), *mine, ours, thine, yours, his, hers, theirs*, are derived from Middle English *myn* [mɪn], *oures* [uɪrəs], *thyn* [θɪn], *youres* [juɪrəs], *his* [hɪs], *hires* [hɪrəs], *heres* [hɛrəs], [θæirəs]. The Middle English forms in [əs] underwent the regular change of [s] to [z] in unstressed syllables and the subsequent syncope of [ə], according to 98 above. Otherwise their development is precisely similar to that of the attributive forms *my, our, thine, your, his, her, and their*, and the initial [ð] of *thine* and *theirs*

¹⁴⁴ The final [z] of [hɪz] is due to the influence of the weak form, which had [z] according to 30, 2, p. 35 above.

¹⁴⁵ The initial [ð] of [ðɛi], [ðɛ:r], [ðɛm] is from the influence of the weak forms, which had [ð] according to 30, 2, p. 35 above.

¹⁴⁶ [əɪm] is a weak form (spelled 'em) from Middle English [hɛm].

and the final [z] of *his* are due to the influence of the attributive forms. These absolute forms are always stressed.

106. Demonstrative Pronouns. The Modern English development of the demonstrative pronouns **this** and **that** is shown in the following tables.

MIDDLE ENGLISH

	Southeast Midland	Northeast Midland	Modern English
Sing.	that [θat]		[ðæt]
Plur.	tho [θɔ:]	thos [θɔ:s]	[ðo:z]
Sing.	thes [θe:s], this [θis]		[ðis]
Plur.	thes [θe:s], these [θe:zə]		[ði:z]

The Modern English forms are derived from Middle English [θat], [θɔ:s], [θis], and [θe:zə] respectively. Since the demonstratives are always stressed and have no weak forms, we might expect that the initial [θ] of the Middle English forms would be preserved in Modern English. The change of [θ] to [ð] is probably due to the fact that these words, tho never entirely unstressed, are usually not pronounced with full stress and may therefore have been subject to this sound-change. The final [s] of Middle English **this** has been preserved in Modern English just as in stressed words, and the [z] of Modern English **those** must go back to a late Middle English form with final [z].¹⁴⁷

107. Relative and Interrogative Pronouns. Of the relative and interrogative pronouns, only *who* is inflected. The Modern English development is shown below.

	Middle English	Modern English
Sing., Plur. Nom.	who [hwo:] ¹⁴⁸	[hu:]
Gen.	whos [hwo:s]	[hu:z] ¹⁴⁹
Obj.	whom [hwo:m]	[hu:m] ¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁷ The origin of Middle English **thos** is uncertain. It seems quite possible that it may have developed from the form **tho** on the analogy of the plural inflection of nouns. Such a development would be readily intelligible in the substantive use of the word and would explain the occurrence of final [z] in Modern English.

¹⁴⁸ There are very few examples in Chaucer of the use of *who* as a pure relative, tho there are numerous examples of relative *whos* and *whom*.

¹⁴⁹ Modern English [hu:] and [hu:m] are used only of persons, but [hu:z] is used also as a singular and plural neuter genitive form; this use goes back to the Middle English period, tho it does not occur in Chaucer.

¹⁵⁰ The use of [hu:] as the objective form of the interrogative is frequent in colloquial English.

The interrogative forms are always stressed, but the relative forms are usually unstressed. Final [z] is therefore the regular product of sound-change in the relative *whose*, but not in the interrogative. Final [z] in the interrogative is possibly the result of the influence of the relative but more probably it is from the analogy of the genitive singular of nouns.¹⁵¹

The historical development of the other pronominal words of Modern English (reflexive, intensive, determinative, etc.) belongs to the syntactical rather than the morphological development of English. The inflectional changes which occur in these words (most of them are uninflected) conform to inflectional types whose development has been explained in previous sections.

VERBS

108. Classification of Modern English Verbs. Modern English verbs may be classified as regular, irregular, and anomalous. The inflectional forms of the present tense are the basis for distinguishing between the regular and irregular verbs on the one hand and the anomalous verbs (**say, have, do; shall, can, may, must, ought, dare, need; will; be**) on the other. The inflectional forms of the preterit (or past) tense are the basis for distinguishing between the regular and the irregular verbs.

109. Present Forms of Regular and Irregular Verbs. Modern English has three present forms: the present indicative third person singular; the present participle; and the common form used as present indicative first and second persons singular, present indicative plural, present subjunctive, imperative, and infinitive. The historical development of these forms is shown in the following tables. The development of the present indicative and the imperative will be illustrated by three verbs, **hear, hunt, and rise**, the development of the other forms by **rise** only. It is to be understood, however, that the other present tense forms of **hear** and **hunt** are analogous to those of **rise**.

¹⁵¹ The change of Middle English [hw] into Modern English [h] is a special development which probably occurred after the change of Middle English [o:] into Modern English [u:]. The [o:] of Middle English *who* from Old English *hwā* [hwa:] is a special development that occurred also in Middle English *two* [two:] from Old English *twā* [twa:].

MIDDLE ENGLISH

		Southeast Midland	Northeast Midland	Modern English
Pres. Ind. Sing.	1	here [he:ɹə]		[hɪr]
	2	herest [he:ɹəst]		[hɪr]
	3	hereth [he:ɹəθ]	heres [he:ɹəs]	[hɪrz]
	Plur.	here(n) [he:ɹən] ¹⁵²		[hɪr]
Imperative Sing.		her [he:ɹ]		[hɪr]
	Plur.	hereth [he:ɹəθ], here [he:ɹə]		[hɪr] ¹⁵⁴
Pres. Ind. Sing.	1	hunte [hʉntə]		[hant]
	2	huntest [hʉntəst]		[hant]
	3	hunteth [hʉntəθ]	hundes [hʉntəs]	[hants]
	Plur.	hunte(n) [hʉntən]		[hant]
Imperative Sing.		hunte [hʉntə] ¹⁵³		[hant]
	Plur.	hunteth [hʉntəθ] hunte [hʉntə]		[hant]
Pres. Ind. Sing.	1	rise [ri:zə]		[raiz]
	2	risest [ri:zəst]		[raiz]
	3	riseth [ri:zəθ]	rises [ri:zəs]	[raizəz]
	Plur.	rise(n) [ri:zən]		[raiz]
Imperative Sing.		ris [ri:s]		[raiz]
	Plur.	riseth [ri:zəθ], rise [ri:zə]		[raiz]
Pres. Subj. Sing.		rise [ri:zə]		[raiz]
	Plur.	rise(n) [ri:zən] ¹⁵²		[raiz]
Pres. Infinitive		rise(n) [ri:zən] ¹⁵⁵		[raiz]
	Gerund	to rise(n) [tə: ri:zən] ¹⁵⁵		[tə raiz]

¹⁵² **e(n)** indicates that the ending [ən] interchanges with [ə]. See note 112 above. The Modern English development of the Middle English forms that ended in **e(n)** is always based on the form without **n**, except that the Modern English past participle of strong verbs (see 111, 113, below) is sometimes based on the Middle English form with [ən] and sometimes on the form with [ə].

¹⁵³ Some verbs had the ending [ə] in the imperative singular and some had no ending.

¹⁵⁴ The Modern English forms of the imperative plural are based on the Middle English forms with the ending [ə], not on those with the ending [əθ].

¹⁵⁵ The gerund originally consisted in Old English of the preposition **tō** followed by an inflected form of the infinitive and the Old English infinitive form of this verb was **risan** and the gerund was **tō risenne**. Even in Old English, however, the gerund was sometimes composed of the preposition followed by the uninflected infinitive, so that the gerund of this verb was **tō risan**. In Middle English the inflected form of the infinitive became less and less common in the gerund, so that the gerund regularly

MIDDLE ENGLISH

	Southeast	Modern
	Midland	English
Verbal Noun	risinge [ri:ziŋgə], rising [ri:ziŋg] ¹⁵⁶	[raizɪŋ]
Pres. Participle	risinge [ri:ziŋgə], rising [ri:ziŋg] ¹⁵⁶	[raizɪŋ]

The Modern English forms of the present are the product of sound-change, with no interference from analogical formations. Apart from sound-changes that occurred within the body of the word, most of them are the Middle English forms minus the final [ə] that was regularly lost at the end of the Middle English period. Three forms, however, require special mention.

1. The Modern English present indicative second singular and imperative singular have developed from the Middle English present indicative plural and imperative plural. This was the result of the use of the plural pronoun **ye** or **you** as a substitute for the singular pronoun **thou** (see 103, 2 above), for the use of the plural subject naturally entailed the use of the plural form of the verb, so that **ye here, ye hunte, ye rise** gradually displaced **thou herest, thou huntest, thou risest** in early Modern English. The imperative singular of most verbs became identical in form with the imperative plural by mere process of sound-change, as in Modern English [hɪr] and [hʌnt]; but when (as in the case of Middle English [ri:s] and [ri:zə], which would have developed into Modern English [rais] and [raiz]), the two forms were not levelled by sound-change, the plural form displaced the singular.

2. The Modern English present indicative third person singular has developed from the Northeast Midland form ending in **-es**. The development of [he:ɾəs], [hʉntəs], [ri:zəs] into Modern English [hɪrɪz], [hʌnts], [raizɪz] is the same as that which has already been explained in connection with the regular noun inflection (98 above), and the three types of present indicative third person singular forms are identical with the three types of the regular genitive singular

ended in [ən] or (with loss of the final n) in [ə]. The Modern English forms of both infinitive and gerund are based on the Middle English forms in [ə].

¹⁵⁶ For the distinction between verbal noun and present participle see note 119 above. The forms without final **e** were much commoner in late Middle English than those with final **e**; for the loss of final **e** in trisyllabic words see 29, I, 3 above.

and plural common of nouns. The Southeast Midland forms [he:ɾəθ], [hʉntəθ], [ri:zəθ] developed into early Modern English [hi:ɾəθ], [hʉntəð], [raizəð], (see 30, 2, p. 35 above) but were gradually displaced in the London dialect by the forms ending in [z], [s], [əz] and became obsolete as spoken forms early in the seventeenth century. (See 95 above.) In Shakespeare's works the *s*-forms are much more frequent than the *th*-forms; the latter occur mostly in verse. Milton always uses the *s*-forms except in *hath* and *doth*, in which the *th*-forms survived longer than in other verbs.

110. Preterit Form of Regular Verbs. The regular verbs of Modern English have a common preterit form which is used as preterit indicative, preterit subjunctive, and past participle. All regular verbs conform to one of the three following types:

1. The common present form ends in a voiced sound other than [d] and the preterit form consists of the common present form plus [d]; e.g. present common [fɪl], [stə:ɾ]; preterit [fɪld], [stə:ɾd].

2. The common present form ends in a voiceless sound other than [t] and the preterit form consists of the common present form plus [t]; e.g. present common [kɪs], [lʊk]; preterit [kɪst], [lʊkt].

3. The common present form ends in [d] or [t] and the preterit form consists of the common present form plus [əd]; e.g. present common [hʌnt], preterit [hʌntəd].

These three types of inflection are all derived from that of the Middle English *weak* verbs. The preterit indicative first and third singular of weak verbs ended in Middle English in *-ede* or *-ed* on the one hand or in *-de* or *-te* on the other. The Modern English development of the representative verbs *fill*, *stir*, *kiss*, *look*, *hunt* is shown in the following tables.

	MIDDLE ENGLISH	MODERN ENGLISH
Pret. Ind. Sing. 1	filde [fɪldə]	[fɪld]
2	fildest [fɪldəst]	[fɪld]
3	filde [fɪldə]	[fɪld]
Plur.	filde(n) [fɪldən] ¹⁵⁷	[fɪld]
Pret. Subj. Sing.	filde [fɪldə]	[fɪld]
Plur.	filde(n) [fɪldən] ¹⁵⁷	[fɪld]
Past Participle	filled [fɪlləd], fild [fɪld]	[fɪld]

¹⁵⁷ See note 152 above.

	MIDDLE ENGLISH	MODERN ENGLISH
Pret. Ind. Sing. 1	stirede [stīrədə], stired [stīrəd] ¹⁵⁸	[stəɪrd]
2	stiredest [stīrədəst]	[stəɪrd]
3	stirede [stīrədə], stired [stīrəd] ¹⁵⁸	[stəɪrd]
Plur.	stirede(n) [stīrədən], stired [stīrəd] ¹⁵⁹	[stəɪrd]
Pret. Subj. Sing.	stirede, [stīrədə], stired [stīrəd] ¹⁵⁸	[stəɪrd]
Plur.	stirede(n) [stīrədən], stired [stīrəd] ¹⁵⁹	[stəɪrd]
Past Participle	stired [stīrəd]	[stəɪrd]
Pret. Ind. Sing. 1	kiste [kɪstə]	[kɪst]
2	kistest [kɪstəst]	[kɪst]
3	kiste [kɪstə]	[kɪst]
Plur.	kiste(n) [kɪstən]	[kɪst]
Pret. Subj. Sing.	kiste [kɪstə]	[kɪst]
Plur.	kiste(n) [kɪstən]	[kɪst]
Past Participle	kist [kɪst]	[kɪst]
Pret. Ind. Sing. 1	lokede [lɔ:kədə], loked [lɔ:kəd] ¹⁵⁸	[lʊkt]
2	lokedest [lɔ:kədəst]	[lʊkt]
3	lokede [lɔ:kədə], loked [lɔ:kəd] ¹⁵⁸	[lʊkt]
Plur.	lokede(n) [lɔ:kədən], loked [lɔ:kəd] ¹⁵⁹	[lʊkt]
Pret. Subj. Sing.	lokede [lɔ:kədə] ¹⁵⁸	[lʊkt]
Plur.	lokede(n) [lɔ:kədən], loked [lɔ:kəd] ¹⁵⁹	[lʊkt]
Past Participle	loked [lɔ:kəd]	[lʊkt]
Pret. Ind. Sing. 1	huntede [hʊntədə], hunted [hʊntəd] ¹⁵⁸	[hʌntəd]
2	huntedest [hʊntədəst]	[hʌntəd]
3	huntede [hʊntədə], hunted [hʊntəd] ¹⁵⁸	[hʌntəd]
Plur.	huntede(n) [hʊntədən], hunted [hʊntəd] ¹⁵⁹	[hʌntəd]
Pret. Subj. Sing.	huntede [hʊntədə], hunted [hʊntəd] ¹⁵⁸	[hʌntəd]
Plur.	huntede(n) [hʊntədən], hunted [hʊntəd] ¹⁵⁹	[hʌntəd]
Past Participle	hunted [hʊntəd]	[hʌntəd]

¹⁵⁸ The ending **-ed** was much commoner in late Middle English than the ending **-ede**. For the Middle English loss of final **e** in words of three syllables see 29, I, 3 above. The Modern English forms are based on the Middle English forms with **-ed**.

¹⁵⁹ The plural forms in **-ed** developed (according to 29, I, 3 above) out of those in **-ede**. The Modern English forms are based on the Middle English forms in **-ed**.

The Modern English forms are the product of sound-change, with no interference from analogy, allowing of course for the fact that the preterit indicative second singular has developed from the Middle English preterit plural as the result of using the plural pronoun **ye** or **you** as a substitute for the singular pronoun **thou** (cf. 109, 1 above). Middle English [fildə] and [kistə] developed into Modern English [fild] and [kist] thru loss of final [ə] according to 29, II, 1 above. Middle English [stjɪrəd] developed into Modern English [stɔɪrd] after syncopation of the unaccented vowel [ə] according to 29, II, 2 above. In Middle English [lo:kəd], however, the syncopation of the unaccented [ə] was followed by an assimilation of the voiced [d] to the voiceless [k] that preceded it, so that the Modern English development is [lʊkt]. In [stjɪrəd], however, no assimilation could occur because the [r] that preceded the [d] after syncopation was a voiced sound. In Middle English [hʊntəd] no syncopation took place, so that the Modern English development [hʌntəd] is still dissyllabic. So also (according to 29, II, 2) in Middle English [wɛddəd] no syncopation took place and the Modern English form is [wɛdəd].

111. Classification of Irregular Verbs. All Modern English verbs (except the anomalous verbs) whose preterit does not conform to one of the three types defined in section 110 are called irregular verbs. The irregular verbs may be classified from the Modern English point of view as **irregular weak** verbs, **strong** verbs, and **indeterminate** verbs.

1. The irregular weak verbs are those irregular verbs whose preterit form ends in [d] or [t] and whose common present form ends in some other sound than [d] or [t]; e.g. **creep, deal, hear, buy, make, bring.**

2. The strong verbs are those whose preterit form ends in some other sound than [d] or [t]; e.g. **drive, freeze, drink, steal, give, draw, blow, fall.**

3. The indeterminate verbs are those whose common present and preterit forms both end in [d] or [t]; e.g. **lead, burst, hurt, set, sit, ride, hide.**

112. Preterit Form of Irregular Weak Verbs. In Middle English, as in Old English and all other Germanic languages, there were two conjugations of verbs, the strong and the weak. There were two types of weak verbs in Middle English. Weak verbs of Type I had preterits ending in **-ede**, later **-ed**, and past participles ending in **-ed**.

Weak verbs of Type II had preterits ending in **-de** or **-te** and past participles ending in **-ed**, **-d**, or **-t**. The principal parts (i.e. infinitive, preterit indicative first and third singular, and past participle) of representative weak verbs are as follows:

Type I	hunte(n) [hʊntən]	hunted [hʊntəd]	hunted [hʊntəd]
	loke(n) [lɔ:kən]	loked [lɔ:kəd]	loked [lɔ:kəd]
	stire(n) [stɪrən]	stired [stɪrəd]	stired [stɪrəd]
	wedde(n) [wɛddən]	wedded [wɛddəd]	wedded [wɛddəd]
Type II	filde(n) [fɪldən]	filde [fɪldə]	fild [fɪld]
	kisse(n) [kɪssən]	kiste [kɪstə]	kist [kɪst]
	caste(n) [kɑstən]	caste [kɑstə]	cast [kɑst]
	bende(n) [bɛndən]	bente [bɛntə]	bent [bɛnt]
	dwelle(n) [dwellən]	dwelte [dwɛltə] ¹⁶⁰	dwelled [dwɛlləd], dwelt [dwɛlt]
	fede(n) [fɛ:dən]	fedde [fɛddə]	fed [fɛd]
	here(n) [hɛ:rən]	herde [hɛrdə]	herd [hɛrd]
	kepe(n) [kɛ:pən]	kepte [kɛptə]	kept [kɛpt]
	mete(n) [mɛ:tən]	mette [mɛttə]	met [mɛt]
	fele(n) [fɛ:lən]	felte [fɛltə]	feled [fɛ:ləd], felt [fɛlt]
	bye(n) [bi:ən]	boughte [bɔuxtə]	bought [bɔuxt]
	bringe(n) [brɪŋən]	broughte [brɔuxtə]	brought [brɔuxt]
	seke(n) [sɛ:kən]	soughte [sɔuxtə]	sought [sɔuxt]
	selle(n) [sɛllən]	solde [sɔ:ldə]	sold [sɔ:ld]

The Middle English weak verbs of Type I have become regular verbs in Modern English, developing according to the processes explained in 110 above. Of the Middle English weak verbs of Type II, however, some have become regular verbs, some have become irregular verbs, and some have become indeterminate verbs; that is:

1. Weak verbs of Type II whose present stems ended in [d] or [t]¹⁶¹ have become **indeterminate** verbs; e.g. M. E. **caste(n)**, **bende(n)**, **fede(n)** **mete(n)**.

But of the weak verbs of Type II whose present stems did not end in [d] or [t]:

¹⁶⁰ In earliest Middle English this verb belonged to Type I; the preterit was **dwelede** and the past participle **dweled**.

¹⁶¹ By the present stem of a verb is meant the present infinitive form minus the infinitive ending **e(n)**.

2. Those whose preterits ended in **-de** preceded by a voiced sound or in **-te** preceded by a voiceless sound and which had the same vowel in the infinitive and preterit have become **regular** verbs; e.g. **fil****le(n)**, **kis****se(n)**; and

3. Those whose preterits ended in **-te** preceded by a voiced sound and those which had a different vowel in the infinitive and preterit have become **irregular weak** verbs;¹⁶² e.g. ME **dwel****le(n)**, **here(n)**, **kepe(n)**, **fele(n)**, **bye(n)**, **selle(n)**.

It can be seen even from the examples just given that the Middle English weak verbs which have become irregular weak verbs in Modern English were already (from a descriptive point of view) irregular in Middle English. The chief sources of irregularity were the following:

a. In Old English and early Middle English the preterit ending **-de** always occurred after voiced sounds and the preterit ending **-te** after voiceless sounds, so that the preterits of **bende(n)**, **dwelle(n)**, and **fele(n)** were **bende** [bɛndə], **dwelde** [dweɪdə], and **felde** [fɛldə]. Later, however, the **-de** changed to **-te** in those verbs in which it was preceded by **n** and in many verbs in which it was preceded by **l**, so that the late Middle English preterits were **bente**, **dwelte**, and **felte**.¹⁶³ The past participles were originally **bended**, **dweled**, and **feled**, and **bent**, **dwelt**, and **felt** appear to have developed later from the analogy of the preterits.

b. In Old English and in very early Middle English the preterits of verbs like **fede(n)**, **here(n)**, **kepe(n)**, **mete(n)**, and **fele(n)** had the

¹⁶² The Modern English development of the irregular weak verbs was like that of **fil****le(n)** and **kis****se(n)** as shown above in 110.

¹⁶³ The ending **-te** was preceded by a voiced consonant also in Middle English **dreme****t** [dremtə], preterit of **dreme(n)** [dremən], and in Middle English **girt** [girtə], preterit of **girde(n)** [girdən], which have developed into the Modern English preterits [dremt] and [gə:rt]. And in Middle English **lefte** [leftə], preterit of **leve(n)** [levən], and **lost** [lostə], used as the preterit of the strong verbs **lese(n)** [lezən], the change of **-de** to **-te** also occurred; the early Middle English forms were **levde** [levdə] and **losde** [lɔzdə], but the voiced [v] and [z] were assimilated to the ending that followed after the change of **-de** to **-te**. The past participles of these verbs were **dremed** [dreməd], **girt** [girt], **left** [left], and **lost** [lost]. The change of [d] to [t] that occurred in the preterit and past participle of weak verbs has never been satisfactorily explained. It can scarcely have been a mere sound-change, because it occurred only in these verb forms. It would seem rather to have been, at least in part, the result of analogical processes, but the nature of these processes has never been defined.

same vowel as the infinitive. But long vowels were usually shortened in early Middle English (according to 27, 1, above) when they were followed by a double consonant or by two or more consonants, so that very early Middle English [fe:ddə], [he:rdə], [ke:ptə], [me:ttə], and [fe:ldə] became [fɛddə], [hɛrdə], [kɛptə], [mɛttə], and [fɛldə].

c. The vowel change that appears in the preterits of verbs like **bye(n)**, **bringe(n)**, **seke(n)**, and **selle(n)**, however, was not a Middle English development but existed already in Old English as the result of developments that occurred very early in the history of the Germanic languages and which are reflected in modern High German, Low German, Dutch, and the Scandinavian languages as well as in English.

113. Preterit Forms of Strong Verbs. The Middle English strong verbs are most simply defined as those whose preterit indicative first and third singular does not end in **-ede**, **-ed**, **-de**, or **-te**. The principal parts (infinitive, preterit indicative first and third singular, preterit indicative plural, and past participle) of representative strong verbs are as follows:

rise(n) [ri:zən]	roos [rɔ:s]	rise(n) [ri:zən]	rise(n) [ri:zən]
frese(n) [fre:zən]	frees [frɛ:s]	frose(n) [frɔ:zən] ¹⁶⁴	frose(n) [frɔ:zən] ¹⁶⁴
drinke(n) [drɪŋkən]	drank [drʌŋk]	drunke(n) [drʊŋkən]	drunke(n) [drʊŋkən]
stele(n) [stɛ:lən]	stal [stʌl]	stole(n) [stɔ:lən] ¹⁶⁴	stole(n) [stɔ:lən]
bere(n) [bɛ:rən]	bar [bʌr] ¹⁶⁵	bore(n) [bɔ:rən] ¹⁶⁵	bore(n) [bɔ:rən]
breke(n) [brɛ:kən]	brak [brʌk]	broke(n) [brɔ:kən] ¹⁶⁴	broke(n) [brɔ:kən]
speke(n) [spɛ:kən]	spak [spʌk]	spoke(n) [spɔ:kən] ¹⁶⁶	spoke(n) [spɔ:kən]
shake(n) [ʃʌ:kən]	shook [ʃɔ:k]	shoke(n) [ʃɔ:kən]	shake(n) [ʃʌ:kən]
falle(n) [fʌllən]	fell [fɛl]	felle(n) [fɛllən]	falle(n) [fʌllən]
knowe(n) [knɔ:uən]	knew [knju]	knewe(n) [knjuən]	knowe(n) [knɔ:uən]

¹⁶⁴ These forms are Northeast Midland forms; the forms that occurred in early Midland Middle English were **frure(n)** [frʊrən], **frøre(n)** [frɔrən]; **stele(n)** [ste:lən] or [stɛ:lən]; **breke(n)** [brɛ:kən] or [brɛ:kən], and the forms given in the tables developed on the analogy of the past participle. Whether fourteenth century London English had the earlier Midland forms or the later is uncertain.

¹⁶⁵ The forms that occurred in Chaucer's fourteenth century London English were **bar** [bʌr], **baar** [bær], **beer** [beɪr] and **bere(n)** [bɛ:rən], **bare(n)** [bærən]. The preterit plural **bore(n)** was a Northeast Midland form that developed from the analogy of the past participle.

¹⁶⁶ The preterit plural forms that occurred in Chaucer's fourteenth century London English were **speke(n)** [spɛ:kən] and **spake(n)** [spʌ:kən]; **spoke(n)** was a Northeast Midland form that developed from the analogy of the past participle.

The Modern English development of the preterit forms of **rise(n)**, **drinke(n)**, **speke(n)**, and **shake(n)** is shown in the following tables.

	MIDDLE ENGLISH	MODERN ENGLISH
Pret. Ind. Sing. 1	roos [rɔ:s]	[rɔ:z] <i>rose</i>
2	rise [rɪzə], roos [rɔ:s]	[rɔ:z] <i>rose</i>
3	roos [rɔ:s]	[rɔ:z] <i>rose</i>
Plur.	rise(n) [rɪzən]	[rɔ:z] <i>rose</i>
Pret. Subj. Sing.	rise [rɪzə]	[rɔ:z] <i>rose</i>
Plur.	rise(n) [rɪzən]	[rɔ:z] <i>rose</i>
Past Participle	rise(n) [rɪzən]	[rɪzən]
Pret. Ind. Sing. 1	drank [drʌŋk]	[dræŋk]
2	drunke [drʊŋkə], drank [drʌŋk]	[dræŋk]
3	drank [drʌŋk]	[dræŋk]
Plur.	drunke(n) [drʊŋkən]	[dræŋk] <i>drank</i>
Pret. Subj. Sing.	drunke [drʊŋkə]	[dræŋk] <i>drank</i>
Plur.	drunke(n) [drʊŋkən]	[dræŋk] <i>drank</i>
Past Participle	drunke(n) [drʊŋkən]	[drʌŋk]
Pret. Ind. Sing. 1	spak [spʌk]	[spo:k] <i>spoke</i>
2	spoke [spɔ:kə], spak [spʌk]	[spo:k]
3	spak [spʌk]	[spo:k] <i>spoke</i>
Plur.	spoke(n) [spɔ:kən]	[spo:k]
Pret. Subj. Sing.	spoke [spɔ:kə]	[spo:k]
Plur.	spoke(n) [spɔ:kən]	[spo:k]
Past Participle	spoke(n) [spɔ:kən]	[spo:kən]
Pret. Ind. Sing. 1	shook [ʃo:k]	[ʃʊk]
2	shoke [ʃo:kə], shook [ʃo:k]	[ʃʊk]
3	shook [ʃo:k]	[ʃʊk]
Plur.	shoke(n) [ʃo:kən]	[ʃʊk]
Pret. Subj. Sing.	shoke [ʃo:kə]	[ʃʊk]
Plur.	shoke(n) [ʃo:kən]	[ʃʊk]
Past Participle	shake(n) [ʃa:kən]	[ʃe:kən]

All of the Modern English forms except those printed in italics are the unmodified product of sound change, the indicative and subjunctive plural forms developing from the Middle English forms without

final **n** and the past participles developing usually from the forms with final **n** but sometimes (as in **drunk**) from forms without final **n**. The italicised forms require special comment.

1. The Middle English preterit indicative first and third singular [**rɔ:s**] would have developed into Modern English [**rɔ:s**]; it therefore seems probable that Modern English [**rɔ:z**] is really a late Middle English plural form [**rɔ:z**] which developed as explained in (3) below. Modern English preterit indicative first and third singular [**spɔ:k**] is also a plural form. After the loss of final [ə] the preterit indicative singular and plural of many strong verbs became identical; e.g. [**ʃo:k**] and [**ʃo:kə**] developed into [[**ʃo:k**], [**fɛl**] and [**fɛllə**] into [**fɛl**], and [**knju**] and [**knjuə**] into [**knju**]. And after the loss of final [ə] the preterit indicative singular and plural of the other verbs (except those whose singular ended in a voiceless consonant and whose plural ended in a voiced consonant, as in [**frɛ:s**] and [**frɔ:z**] from [**frɛ:s**] and [**frɔ:zə**] differed only in the quality of their vowel; e.g. [**drank**] and [**drɒnkə**] became [**drank**] and [**drɒnk**], [**spak**] and [**spɔ:kə**] became [**spak**] and [**spɔ:k**], etc. Then new analogical preterit singulars or preterit plurals were made; e.g. the new singular [**spɔ:k**] which developed on the analogy: preterit singular [**spɔ:k**] : preterit plural [**spɔ:k**] : preterit singular [**ʃo:k**] : preterit plural [**ʃo:k**], etc.¹⁶⁷

2. The early Middle English preterit indicative second singular always differed from the first and third singular in having the ending **-e** which the first and third persons lacked and usually also in having a different vowel in the accented syllable (e.g. **rise**, **drunke**, etc.). In late Middle English, however, the preterit indicative second singular came to be identical with the first and third persons (e.g. **roos**, **drank**). But before the end of the fifteenth century there developed analogical forms of the preterit indicative second singular with the ending **-est**, e.g. **rorest**, **shokest**, etc. The Modern English preterit indicative second singular forms are derived from the early Modern English preterit indicative plural forms as a result of using the plural pronoun **ye** or **you** instead of the singular pronoun **thou** (cf. 109, 1 above).

¹⁶⁷ Analogical formations of this kind were made also before the loss of final [ə]; e.g. the preterit singular forms [**be:r**] and [**ba:r**] referred to in note 165 above were analogical formations made on the basis of the preterit indicative plural forms [**be:rən**] and [**ba:rən**], but the loss of final [ə] gave a very strong impetus to the tendency.

3. The preterit plural forms **rose** and **drank** are based on analogical preterit plural forms that developed, probably after the loss of final [ə], as explained above under (1). When the originally singular form [rɔ:s] came to be used as a plural form the final consonant was voiced as in other preterit plural forms, e.g. Middle English [rɪzən], [frɔ:zən].

4. The preterit subjunctive forms **rose** and **drank** did not develop from the Middle English forms [rɪzə], [rɪzən], and [drʊnkə], [drʊnkən], but are based on later forms that developed by analogy after [rɔ:z] and [drʌnk] had become preterit indicative plural forms.

The Modern English development of the preterit forms of the other strong verbs whose principal parts are given at the beginning of this section has been similar to that of the four verbs whose development has been traced in detail. The development was not completed, however, in Standard Written English until at least the middle or the latter part of the seventeenth century. The forms of the strong verbs that occur in Shakespeare's works are frequently different from those of present English. Shakespeare used as the preterits of **bear**, **break**, and **speak**, for example, not only the forms that occur in present English but also **bare**, **brake**, and **spake**, which are based on a different set of Middle English forms from those given in the tables above. As the past participles of **steal**, **bear**, **break**, **speak**, **shake**, and **fall** he used not only the forms that occur in present English but also **stole**; **bore**; **spoke**; **shook** and **shaked**; **fell**. And as the preterit of **drink** he used both **drank** and **drunk**. In fact, even in present English there is not *complete* uniformity of usage with regard to the principal parts of the strong verbs.

114. Preterit Form of Indeterminate Verbs. The weak and strong verbs constituted in Middle English clear-cut, mutually exclusive morphological types, the weak verbs being those whose preterit indicative first and third singular ended in **-ed**, **-de**, or **-te** and the strong verbs being those whose preterit indicative first and third singular did not end in **-ed**, **-de**, or **-te**. There can be no question as to which of the following Middle English verbs are weak and which are strong:

bende(n) [bɛndən]	bente [bɛntə]	bente(n) [bɛntən]	bent [bɛnt]
bete(n) [bɛtən]	beet [beɪt]	bete(n) [bɛtən]	bete(n) [bɛtən]
bilde(n) [bɪldən]	bilte [bɪltə]	bilte(n) [bɪltən]	bilt [bɪlt]
binde(n) [bi:ndən]	bond [bɔ:nd]	bounde(n) [bu:ndən]	bounde(n) [bu:ndən]
bite(n) [bi:tən]	bot [bɔ:t]	bite(n) [bi:tən]	bite(n) [bi:tən]
caste(n) [kɑstən]	caste [kɑstə]	caste(n) [kɑstən]	cast [kɑst]
fedde(n) [fɛ:dən]	fedde [fɛddə]	fedde(n) [fɛddən]	fed [fɛd]
fighte(n) [fɪçtən]	faught [fauht]	foughte(n) [fɔuxtən]	foughte(n) [fɔuxtən]
hide(n) [hi:dən]	hidde [hiddə]	hidde(n) [hiddən]	hid [hɪd]
holde(n) [hɔ:ldən]	held [hɛld] ¹⁶⁸	helde(n) [hɛldən] ¹⁶⁸	holde(n) [hɔ:ldən]
mete(n) [mɛtən]	mette [mɛttə]	mette(n) [mɛttən]	met [mɛt]
ride(n) [ri:dən]	rood [rɔ:d]	ride(n) [ri:dən]	ride(n) [ri:dən]
sette(n) [sɛttən]	sette [sɛttə]	sette(n) [sɛttən]	set [sɛt]
sitte(n) [sɪttən]	sat [sət]	sete(n) [sɛ:tən]	sete(n) [sɛ:tən]
stande(n) [stɑn- dən] ¹⁶⁹	stood [sto:d]	stode(n) [sto:dən]	stande(n) [stɑndən] ¹⁶⁹

In Modern English, however, these verbs (*bend, beat, build, bind, bite, cast, feed, fight, hide, hold, meet, ride, set, sit, stand*) can be classified as irregular verbs but not as either strong or weak verbs. Because of the loss of final [ə] at the end of the Middle English period it is no longer possible for us to recognise that **beat** is a strong verb but **cast** is a weak verb; that **bite** is a strong verb but **hide** is a weak verb;¹⁷⁰ that **sit** is a strong verb but **set** is a weak verb. Like all irregular verbs whose common present form ends in [d] or [t], they are **indeterminate** verbs.

The Modern English development of the strong verbs given in the list above was like that of the strong verbs whose development is traced in the preceding section.¹⁷¹ The Modern English development of the weak verbs in the list was like that of **filte(n)** and **kisse(n)** as shown above in 110. Middle English **bente, bent** and **bilte, bilt** show the change of **-de**, and **-d**, to **-te** and **-t** (112, a), and Middle English **fedde, fed; hidde, hid; and mette, met** have the shortened vowel as explained in 112, b.¹⁷²

¹⁶⁸ Chaucer's forms appear to have been [he:ld] and [he:ldən].

¹⁶⁹ Chaucer's form appears to have been [stɑ:ndən].

¹⁷⁰ The Modern English past participle [hɪdn] is an analogical development.

¹⁷¹ The Modern English past participles [hɛld], [sɛt], and [stʌd] are analogical formations of a type that is not illustrated in any of the verbs given in 113.

¹⁷² Many Middle English strong verbs have become regular verbs or irregular weak verbs in Modern English; the Middle English principal parts of **help** were **helpe(n)**

115. Classification of Anomalous Verbs. The anomalous verbs may be classified as follows:

1. The anomalous weak verbs **say, have, do.**
2. The preteritive-present verbs **shall, can, may, must, ought, dare** and the verbs **need** and **will**, which tho not preteritive-present verbs historically have developed in Modern English certain formal characteristics of the preteritive-present verbs.
3. The verb **be.**

All of these verbs except **ought, dare, and need** have both stressed and unstressed forms, and the unstressed forms of all but **say** (and possibly **have**) are used very much more frequently than the stressed forms. The following account of the Modern English development of the anomalous verbs will confine itself to showing the relation between the Middle English stressed forms and the Modern English stressed forms. The Middle English and the Modern English unstressed forms will be mentioned only when there is special occasion for doing so.¹⁷³ Unless it is otherwise stated, the Modern English stressed forms are derived from the Middle English stressed forms by the regular processes of sound-change.

All of the anomalous verbs except **say** have, in addition to their morphological characteristics, important syntactical characteristics and functions that are outside the scope of the present book.¹⁷⁴

116. Anomalous Weak Verbs. The anomalous weak verbs differ from the regular and irregular verbs in the formation of their present indicative third person singular. The present indicative third person singular of these verbs has the ending [z], but the ending is not added to the present common form. The Modern English development of the Middle English forms of the present indicative is shown in the following tables.

halp, holpe(n), holpe(n) and even Shakespeare used both the strong preterit and past participle **holp** and the weak form **helped**. A few Middle English weak verbs have become strong; e.g. **dig** is still a weak verb in Shakespeare but has become strong in later English. An account of these shiftings, however, belongs rather to the history of words than to the history of morphological types.

¹⁷³ The development of the unstressed forms of these verbs has been similar to the development of the unstressed forms of the pronouns; see note 138 above.

¹⁷⁴ All of these verbs have special negative forms, e.g. [hæznt], [dɔ:nt], [ʃænt], etc. Their interrogative form is also different from that of other verbs. The commonest use of *have, do, shall, can, may, must, will*, and *be* is in the various periphrastic forms of the verb.

MIDDLE ENGLISH

	Southeast Midland	Northeast Midland	Modern English
Pres. Ind. Sing.	1 seye [sæiə]		[seɪ], [seɪ]
	2 seyest [sæiəst]		[seɪ], [seɪ]
	3 seyeth [sæiəθ]	seyes [sæiəs]	[seɪz]
Plur.	seye(n) [sæiən]		[seɪ], [seɪ]
Pres. Ind. Sing.	1 have [hævə]		[hæv]
	2 hast [hast]		[hæv]
	3 hath [hæθ]	has [has]	[hæz]
Plur.	have(n) [hævən]		[hæv]
Pres. Ind. Sing.	1 do [doɪ]		[duɪ]
	2 dost [doɪst]		[duɪ]
	3 doth [doɪθ]	dos [doɪs]	[dʌz]
Plur.	do(n) [doɪn]		[duɪ]

All of the present indicative forms except the third person singular are the result of the regular sound-changes, allowing for the fact that the plural form has developed from the Middle English form without **n** and that the second person singular form has developed from the Middle English plural. The present indicative third singular forms have developed from the Northeast Midland forms, and Modern English [hæz] is phonetically regular except in having the voiced final [z], which developed only in unstressed syllables (see 30, 2, p. 35 above). The voiced ending has either developed from the analogy of the verbs in which the final [z] is phonetically regular or else is the result of restressing the weak form, which (being an unstressed syllable) had final [z] by regular phonetic development. The voiced ending occurs for the same reason in [dʌz], but it is phonetically regular in [seɪz] from the late Northeast Midland form [sæiəz]. The vowel sound of [dʌz] is also the result of restressing the early Modern English weak form, which had the short vowel [ʊ] in place of the [uɪ] which was the regular development of Middle English [oɪ] in the strong form.¹⁷⁵ The vowel of [seɪz] was also probably the result of restressing, for in early Modern English the strong form was probably [seɪz] and the weak form [seɪz].

¹⁷⁵ [dʌz] might also have resulted from restressing the Modern English weak form [dʌz]. The explanation of the negative form [do:nt] is difficult and uncertain.

With regard to their preterit forms these verbs are irregular **weak** verbs. The Modern English development of the Middle English principal parts (infinitive, preterit indicative first and third singular, and past participle) was as follows:

MIDDLE ENGLISH	MODERN ENGLISH
seye (n) [sæiən]	[seɪ], [se:]
seyde [sæidə]	[sed]
seyd [sæid]	[sed]
have (n) [hævən]	[hæv]
hadde [haddə]	[hæd]
had [həd]	[hæd]
do (n) [do:n]	[du:]
dide [didə]	[did]
don [do:n]	[dʌn]

The Modern English forms are the product of sound-change, except that the preterit singular [sed] is a restressed weak form, that the past participle [sed] is an analogical form based on the preterit, and that the past participle [dʌn] is an analogical (?) form which has the vowel of the present third singular [dʌz]. (The past participles cannot be explained as restressed weak forms because they are always stressed and have no weak forms.)

117. Preteritive-Present Verbs. The preteritive-present verbs (a group of verbs common to all the Germanic languages) are so called because their Old English **present** indicative forms were originally the **preterit** indicative forms of strong verbs. These old **preterit** forms acquired a **present** meaning and new **weak** preterits were then formed on the basis of the present stems. Even in Modern English these verbs can be recognised as a distinct morphological group by the fact that their present indicative third singular has no ending, but the peculiarities of their formation can be more clearly recognised in Middle English than in Modern English. The Modern English development of the Middle English forms of **shall**, **can**, **may**, and **dare**, was as follows.

	MIDDLE ENGLISH	MODERN ENGLISH
Pres. Ind. Sing.	1 shal [ʃal]	[ʃæl]
	2 shalt [ʃalt]	[ʃæl]
	3 shal [ʃal]	[ʃæl]
Plur.	shulle(n) [ʃullən], shul [ʃʊl], shal [ʃal]	[ʃæl]
Pret. Ind. Sing.	1 sholde [ʃo:ldə]	[ʃʊd]
	2 sholdest [ʃo:ldəst]	[ʃʊd]
	3 sholde [ʃo:ldə]	[ʃʊd]
Plur.	sholde(n) [ʃo:ldən]	[ʃʊd]
Pres. Ind. Sing.	1 can [kan]	[kæn]
	2 canst [kənst]	[kæn]
	3 can [kan]	[kæn]
Plur.	conne(n) [kʊnnən], can [kan]	[kæn]
Pret. Ind. Sing.	1 couthe [ku:ðə], coude [ku:də]	[kʊd]
	2 couthest [ku:ðəst], coudest [ku:dəst]	[kʊd]
	3 couthe [ku:ðə], coude [ku:də]	[kʊd]
Plur.	couthe(n) [ku:ðən], coude(n) [ku:dən]	[kʊd]
Pres. Ind. Sing.	1 may [mæi]	[meɪ], [meɪ]
	2 mayst [mæist]	[meɪ], [meɪ]
	3 may [mæi]	[meɪ], [meɪ]
Plur.	mowe(n) [mu:ən], may [mæi]	[meɪ], [meɪ]
Pret. Ind. Sing.	1 mighte [miçtə]	[maɪt]
	2 mightest [miçtəst]	[maɪt]
	3 mighte [miçtə]	[maɪt]
Plur.	mighte(n) [miçtən]	[maɪt]
Pres. Ind. Sing.	1 dar [dar], [daɪr] ¹⁷⁶	[deɪr]
	2 darst [darst]	[deɪr]
	3 dar [dar], [daɪr] ¹⁷⁶	[deɪr] ¹⁷⁷
Plur.	dorre(n) [dʊrrən], dare(n) [daɪrən], dar [dar], [daɪr] ¹⁷⁶	[deɪr]
Pret. Ind. Sing.	1 dorste [dʊrstə]	[dɔ:rst] ¹⁷⁸
	2 dorstest [dʊrstəst]	[dɔ:rst]
	3 dorste [dʊrstə]	[dɔ:rst]
Plur.	dorste(n) [dʊrstən]	[dɔ:rst]

¹⁷⁶ The forms [daɪrən] and [daɪr] are not recorded in Middle English but are inferred from the Modern English forms.

¹⁷⁷ There is also an analogical form [deɪrz].

¹⁷⁸ The analogical preterit [deɪrd] has displaced the older [dɔ:rst] both in colloquial and literary use.

All the Modern English forms except *should* and *could* are the product of sound-change, the second person singular developing from the early Modern English plural forms, the present plural from the monosyllabic Middle English forms, and the preterit plural from the Middle English forms without **n**. The Middle English preterit form [ʃo:ldə] developed regularly into early Modern [ʃu:ld], the corresponding Early Modern English weak form being [ʃʊld], later [ʃʊd]; the Modern English strong form [ʃʊd] is probably the early Modern English weak form restressed. The development of Modern English [kʊd] is less clear. The early Modern English strong form was [ku:ld]; this form was not derived from Middle English [ku:ldə] but developed under the influence of early Modern English [ʃu:ld] and [wu:ld] (for the latter see under *will* below). The early Modern English weak form was [kʊld], later [kʊd], and the Modern English strong form [kʊd] appears to have resulted from restressing the weak form. The preservation of the early Modern English vowel [ʊ] in [ʃʊd] and [kʊd] may be due to the influence of Modern English [wʊd] (for which see below).

Modern English **must** is derived from Middle English **moste** [mo:stə], **mostest** [mo:stest], **moste** [mo:stə], plural **moste(n)** [mo:stən], the preterit form of the preteritive-present verb **moot** [mo:t], which originally meant *be permitted* but which in Chaucer's time was used also in the sense of *be under obligation*. Even in Chaucer's period **moste**, originally preterit, was beginning to be used in a present sense. In Modern English *must* regularly has the sense of *be under obligation*, but it still has the older meaning *be permitted* in negative sentences like "You mustn't go." It is always used as a present form except in sentences like "He said he must go." Modern English [mʌst] is not derived directly from Middle English [mo:stə], which became early Modern English [mu:st] but is a restressed weak form.

Modern English **ought** is derived from Middle English **oughte** [ɔxtə], **oughtest** [ɔxtəst], **oughte** [ɔxtə], plural **oughte(n)** [ɔxtən], which was originally the preterit of a preteritive-present verb that meant *possess* (for the Old English forms and the Middle English development see 62 above). In Chaucer's time the present tense of this verb had lost its preteritive-present characteristics and had the regular present endings; it has developed into the Modern English regular verb **owe** (which in Shakespeare is still very frequently used

in the older sense of *possess*). The originally preterit form **oughte** was used by Chaucer both as a preterit and a present form in the sense of *be under obligation*. Modern English [ɔ:t] is always used as a present form except in sentences like "He said he ought to go." It is the regular phonetic development of Middle English [ɔuxte] and is always stressed.

Modern English **need** is derived from the Middle English weak verb **nede(n)** [ne:ðən] and has a regular preterit in Modern English. In very late Middle English or early Modern English it developed an uninflected present indicative third singular which still survives in present English. The uninflected form is chiefly used in questions and negative sentences (e.g. "Need he go?", "He needn't go."); in other situations the regular form [ni:dz] is generally used. It is by no means clear why this verb developed the uninflected form, but it seems to have been (at least in part) from the analogy of the preteritive-present verbs; there was a Middle English preteritive-present verb **thar** [θar], preterit **thurte** [θurte], from the Old English preteritive-present verb **þurfan**, which meant *need*.

The development of Modern English **will** is shown in the following table.

	MIDDLE ENGLISH	MODERN ENGLISH
Pres. Ind. Sing.	1 wil [wɪl], wol [wʊl]	[wɪl]
	2 wilt [wɪlt], wolt [wʊlt]	[wɪl]
	3 wil [wɪl], wol [wʊl]	[wɪl]
Plur.	wille(n) [wɪllən], wil [wɪl], wol [wʊl]	[wɪl]
Pret. Ind. Sing.	1 wolde [woɪldə]	[wʊd]
	2 woldest [woɪldəst]	[wʊd]
	3 wolde [woɪldə]	[wʊd]
Plur.	wolde(n) [woɪldən]	[wʊd]

The Modern English present form is the regular product of sound-change. Middle English [woɪldə] developed regularly into early Modern English [wʊɪld]; the early Modern English weak form was [wʊld], later [wʊd]. The strong form [wʊd] is a restressed form.¹⁷⁹ This verb was not originally a preteritive-present verb but an anomalous verb of entirely different formation (for the Old English and early Middle English forms see p. 64 above).

¹⁷⁹ The explanation of the negative form [wɔ:nt] is difficult and uncertain.

118. **The Verb *be*.** The Modern English development of the Middle English forms of the verb **be** is shown in the following table.

MIDDLE ENGLISH			
	Southeast Midland	Northeast Midland	Modern English
Pres. Ind. Sing.	1 am [am]		[æm]
	2 art [art]		[aɪr]
	3 is [is]		[iz]
Plur.	be(n) [be:n]	are(n) [aɪrən]	[aɪr]
Pret. Ind. Sing.	1 was [was]		[wɔz], [waz], [wʌz]
	2 were [wɛ:rə]		[wɛ:r], [wɔ:r] ¹⁸⁰
	3 was [was]		[wɔz], [waz], [wʌz]
Plur.	were(n) [wɛ:rən]		[wɛ:r], [wɔ:r] ¹⁸¹
Pres. Subj. Sing.	be [be:]		[bi:]
Plur.	be(n) [be:n]		[bi:]
Pret. Subj. Sing.	were [wɛ:rə]		[wɛ:r], [wɔ:r]
Plur.	were(n) [wɛ:rən]		[wɛ:r], [wɔ:r]
Imperative Sing.	be [be:]		[bi:]
Plur.	beth [be:θ], be [be:]		[bi:]
Pres. Infinitive	be(n) [be:n]		[bi:]
Gerund	to be(n) [to: be:n]		[tə bi:]
Verbal Noun	being [be:ɪŋg]		[bi:ɪŋ]
Pres. Participle	being [be:ɪŋg]		[bi:ɪŋ]
Past Participle	be(n) [be:n]		[bi:n], [bɪn], [bɛn]

All the Modern English forms except *is*, *was*, *were*, and *been* are historical forms derived from the Middle English form by the regular process of sound change, the Modern English plural forms and the infinitive and gerund being derived from the Middle English forms without **n**.

The present indicative third singular [iz] is a restressed weak form, for tho its vowel shows the regular development of Middle English [i] its final consonant could only have developed in an unstressed

¹⁸⁰ The second person singular form is of course developed from the early Modern English plural form. The second person singular forms *wert* and *wast* developed apparently in early Modern English from the analogy of the preteritive present verbs (e.g. *shalt*, *canst*).

¹⁸¹ Middle English *was* and *were(n)* were originally the preterit forms of a strong verb.

syllable. The present indicative plural form [aɪr] is the restressed form of the early Modern English weak form [aɪ], for the regular development of the Northeast Midland Middle English [aɪrə] would have been [ɛɪr], a form which existed in earlier Modern English but which is now obsolete.

All of the preterit indicative singular forms are restressed, for they have the final [z] that developed only in unaccented syllables; [wɒz] and [wəz] have developed from a restressing of the early Modern English weak form [wəz] (see 28, 3 above), [wɒz] being the usual form in British English and [wəz] the usual form in American English; [wʌz] is a later form which has developed from a restressing of the later Modern English weak form [wəz].

The plural form [wɛɪr] is the regular development of Middle English [wɛrə]; the form [wɔɪr] would have developed from restressing either the early Modern English weak form [wɛr] or the later weak form [wɪr].

The past participle [bi:n] is the regular development of Middle English [bein]; [bɛn] is the result of restressing the early Modern English weak form [bɛn]; [bɪn] is the result of restressing a later Modern English weak form, probably [bɪn], which developed from the destressing of the strong form [bi:n].

APPENDIX

MIDDLE ENGLISH SPELLING

119. Influence of Old English Spelling. In the beginning of the Middle English period (roughly between 1050 and 1150) there occurred a large number of changes of pronunciation, particularly in the vowel sounds. Old English *æ* became [a]; Old English *ā* became [ɔ:]; the Old English diphthongs *ēa* and *ea* became the simple vowels [ɛ:] and [a]; Old English *ēo* and *eo* became [œ:] and [æ], which later developed into [e:] and [ɛ]; and a number of new diphthongs—[ai], [ei], [au], etc.—developed out of Old English simple vowels followed by *ġ*, *w*, *h*, etc.¹⁸² While these changes were going on and for some time after they had been carried out, people continued to spell words in the way they had been spelled in Old English. For example, Old English *þæt* was spelled with *æ*, Old English *bēon*¹⁸³ was spelled with *eo*, Old English *strēam* was spelled with *ea*, and Old English *stān* was spelled with *a* after the pronunciation of these words had become [θat], [bæ:n] or [be:n], [stre:m], and [sto:n]. But the changes that had taken place in pronunciation were so numerous that it proved to be impossible to maintain the old system of spelling. Confusion in spelling soon arose. After words that were spelled with *eo* and with *e* came to have the same sound in Middle English, people regarded the two signs as interchangeable; they would therefore spell Old English *bēon* and *weorc* with *e*, and Old English *swēte* and *helpan* with *eo*. Moreover, *ea* and *eo* were enough alike in appearance to be confused in use, so that [be:n], from Old English *bēon* was sometimes spelled with *ea* and [stre:m], from Old English *strēam* was sometimes spelled with *eo*. As a result, the spelling of the vowel sounds in the earliest Middle

¹⁸² For an account of these sound changes see 26, 27, 30 above.

¹⁸³ The Old English manuscripts as a rule make no distinction between long and short vowels and diphthongs; *bēon*, for example, with a long diphthong, and *weorc*, with a short diphthong, are both spelled with *eo*. The marks of length are added by modern editors. Nor do the manuscripts distinguish *ċ* (i.e., [tʃ]) from *c* (i.e., [k]) or *ȝ* (i.e., [j]) from *g* (i.e., [g]). The dot is added by modern editors.

English texts exhibits great confusion, which gradually diminished, however, as the digraphs **ea** and **eo** fell more and more into disuse and as the character **æ** gave place to **a** as a means of representing the vowel [a].

120. Influence of Old French Spelling. There is no doubt that in the course of time the confusion of early Middle English spelling would have been done away with and that a good system of spelling Middle English would have been evolved on the basis of the Old English system if the English people had been left to themselves. But they were not left to themselves. French was the language of the superior class from 1066 to the middle of the fourteenth century. Educated people read French books and were expected to be able to write as well as speak the French language; French words were adopted into the language and kept their French spellings when used in writing. As a result, people began to spell certain English sounds according to the French system of spelling. The most important changes that came about were these:

1. [ɛ:], spelled in OE with **æ** and in early ME with **æ** or **ea**, came to be spelled with **e**, as in French; e.g., early ME **hæþ**, later ME **heþ** or **heeth**.
2. [u], spelled in OE and early ME with **u**, was often spelled with **o** in later ME, particularly in proximity to letters like **n**, **m**, **v**, and **w**; e.g., early ME **sune**, later ME **sone**.
3. [u:], spelled in OE and early ME with **u**, was usually spelled in late ME with **ou**; e.g., early ME **hus**, late ME **hous**.
4. [y] and [y:], which were spelled in OE with **y** and had the sound of French **u**, were spelled in Southern ME and in the other ME dialects which contained this sound, with **u**, as in French; [y:] was sometimes spelled **ui**; e.g., OE **fyllan**, Southern ME **vulle(n)**; OE **fȳr**, Southern ME **vur**, **vuir**.
5. [e:], spelled in early ME with **e** or **eo** is often spelled in late ME with **ie**; e.g., OE **spēdan**, early ME **spede(n)**, late ME **spede(n)** or **spiede(n)**.
6. [v], spelled in OE and in the earliest ME with **f**, came to be spelled with **v**, as in French; e.g., OE **life**, ME **live**.
7. [tʃ], spelled in OE with **c**, came to be spelled in ME with **ch**, as in French; e.g., OE **ċidan**,¹⁸⁴ ME **chide(n)**.
8. [kw], spelled in OE with **cw**, came to be spelled in ME with **qu**, as in French; e.g., OE **cwēn**, ME **quen** or **queen**.

¹⁸⁴ As to **ċ**, see the preceding note.

The influence of French spelling on English spelling **began** soon after the Norman conquest, but the changes which it brought about were not completed until after the middle of the thirteenth century.

121. Spelling of Middle English Vowels and Diphthongs. The table given below shows the spellings which are most commonly used in Middle English manuscripts to represent the various vowels and diphthongs. The first column contains the sounds as represented in phonetic notation; the second column contains the spellings by which these sounds are represented in the earlier Middle English manuscripts (roughly, before 1250); the third column contains the spellings by which these same sounds are represented in the later Middle English manuscripts (roughly, after 1250). Spellings which are decidedly less frequent than the others are placed in parentheses.

ME Sound	Early ME Spelling	Late ME Spelling
[a:]	a	a, aa
[ɑ]	a, æ, ea	a
[e:]	e, eo, (ea)	e, ee, (ie)
[ɛ:]	æ, ea, e, (eo)	e, ee
[ɛ]	e, eo, (æ)	e
[i:]	i, (y)	i, ii, y, (ei), (ey)
[ī]	i, (y)	i, y
[o:]	o	o, oo
[ɔ:]	a, o, (oa)	o, oo
[ɒ]	o	o
[u:]	u, v ¹⁸⁵	ou, ow, (o)
[ʊ]	u, v	u, v, o
[y:]	y, u, v, ui	u, v, ui
[y]	y, u, v	u, v
[œ:]	eo	eo, o, u, ue
[œ]	eo	eo, o, u, ue
[ai]	ai, æi, aɜ, æɜ	ai, ay
[æi]		ai, ay, ei, ey
[au]	au, aw, aɜ, ag, agh	au, aw
[ɛi]	ei, æi, eɜ, æɜ	ei, ey
[ɛu]	eu, ew	eu, ew
[iu]	iu, iw, eu, ew, eou, eow	iu, iw, eu, ew, u, ui

¹⁸⁵ The letters **u** and **v** were used interchangeably by the Middle English scribes.

ME Sound	Early ME Spelling	Late ME Spelling
[ɔ:u]	au, aw, aʒ, ag, agh, ou, ow, oʒ, og, ogh ¹⁸⁶	ou, ow
[ɔu]	ou, ow, o	ou, ow, o
[ɔi]	oi	oi, oy ¹⁸⁷

The student should remember that all diacritical marks which he finds in Middle English texts are supplied by modern editors.

122. Spelling of Middle English Consonants. The table given below shows the spellings which are most commonly used in Middle English manuscripts to represent consonant sounds, so far as the spelling of these sounds differs from that of Modern English.

ME Sound	EME Spelling	LME Spelling
[ç], [x]	h, ʒ, ¹⁸⁸ g	gh, h, ʒ, ch
[hw]	hw, wh	wh
[j]	ʒ, ¹⁸⁸ g	y, ʒ

¹⁸⁶ The Middle English diphthongs are variously spelled in early Middle English for two reasons. First, the sounds of which they were composed were variously spelled, [ɔ:], e.g., being spelled either *a* or *o*. Second, the diphthongs themselves were of various origin (see 27, 2 above), [au], e.g., developing out of OE *a* followed by *w* or *g*, or out of OE *æ* followed by *h*. Many of the early Middle English spellings of these diphthongs are traditional spellings which do not represent adequately the true nature of the sounds. See also note 188 below.

¹⁸⁷ The tables given in 90 and 91 are not intended to include *all* of the spellings that occur in Middle English manuscripts, but only those that are fairly common. No account is taken of spellings that are rare or eccentric. And no account is taken of spellings that may represent differences of *pronunciation*; such spellings are dealt with in the account of Middle English dialects which is given in 64 ff.

¹⁸⁸ The character ʒ was called ʒoʒ [jɔx], and was a slight modification of the Old English form of the letter *g*. The Old English *g* represented two sounds, that of [j], e.g., in *dæg*, and that of [ɣ], e.g., in *āgen*; this sound is a spirant like the *g* of North German *sagen*. In Middle English the sound of [j] was preserved if it occurred at the beginning of a word, as in ʒe, from OE *gē*. But when it was preceded by a vowel it united with the vowel to form a diphthong, as in ME *dai* from OE *dæg*. The Old English sound [ɣ] became [w] in early ME when preceded by a back vowel, and then it united with the preceding vowel to form a diphthong, as in ME *owen* [ɔ:uən] from OE *āgen*. In the few words in which it was followed by a vowel and preceded by a consonant, OE [ɣ] became [w] in ME, e.g., in *halwien*, from OE *hālgian*. OE initial [ɣ] however, became in ME a stop consonant like the *g* in Modern English *good*. This stop *g* was then spelled with a new variety of the letter *g* which was very

ME Sound	EME Spelling	LME Spelling
[ʃ]	sc, ss, s	sch, ssch, sh, ssh, s
[θ]	þ, ¹⁸⁹ ð ¹⁹⁰	þ, th
[ð]	þ, ð	þ, th
[v]	f, v, u	v, u
[w]	w (initially)	w
[w]	w, ʒ, g, gh, h (medially) ¹⁹¹	w

much like the modern **g**. The Old English form of the letter **g**, slightly modified, was then used to spell the sounds **other than stop g** which had developed out of the two Old English sounds of **g**. That is, it was used to represent:

1. The sound of [j], e.g., in **ʒe**, from OE **ġē**;
2. The sound of [w], e.g., in **halʒien**, from OE **hālgian**;
3. The second element of the diphthongs [ai] and [ei], e.g., in **daʒ** from OE **dæg** and **weʒ** from OE **weg**;
4. The second element of the diphthongs [au] and [ɔ:u], e.g., in **draʒen** from OE **dragan**, and **aʒen** or **oʒen** from OE **āgen**.

It was also used to represent:

5. The sound of [ç], or [x], e.g., in **niʒt** from OE **niht**.

¹⁸⁹ The name of the letter **þ** is "thorn."

¹⁹⁰ The name of the letter **ð** is "crossed d" or "eth" [eð].

¹⁹¹ [w] is spelled **ʒ**, **g**, **h**, or **gh** when it developed out of OE [ʒ], e.g., in **halʒien**, **halghien** from OE **hālgian**. See note 188 above.

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